



'Sleepers'

'The Crucible'

'The Chamber'

'In Love and War'

'That Thing You Do!'

'Preacher's Wife'

341/342 • AUGUST 23/30, 1996

Entertainment WEEKLY

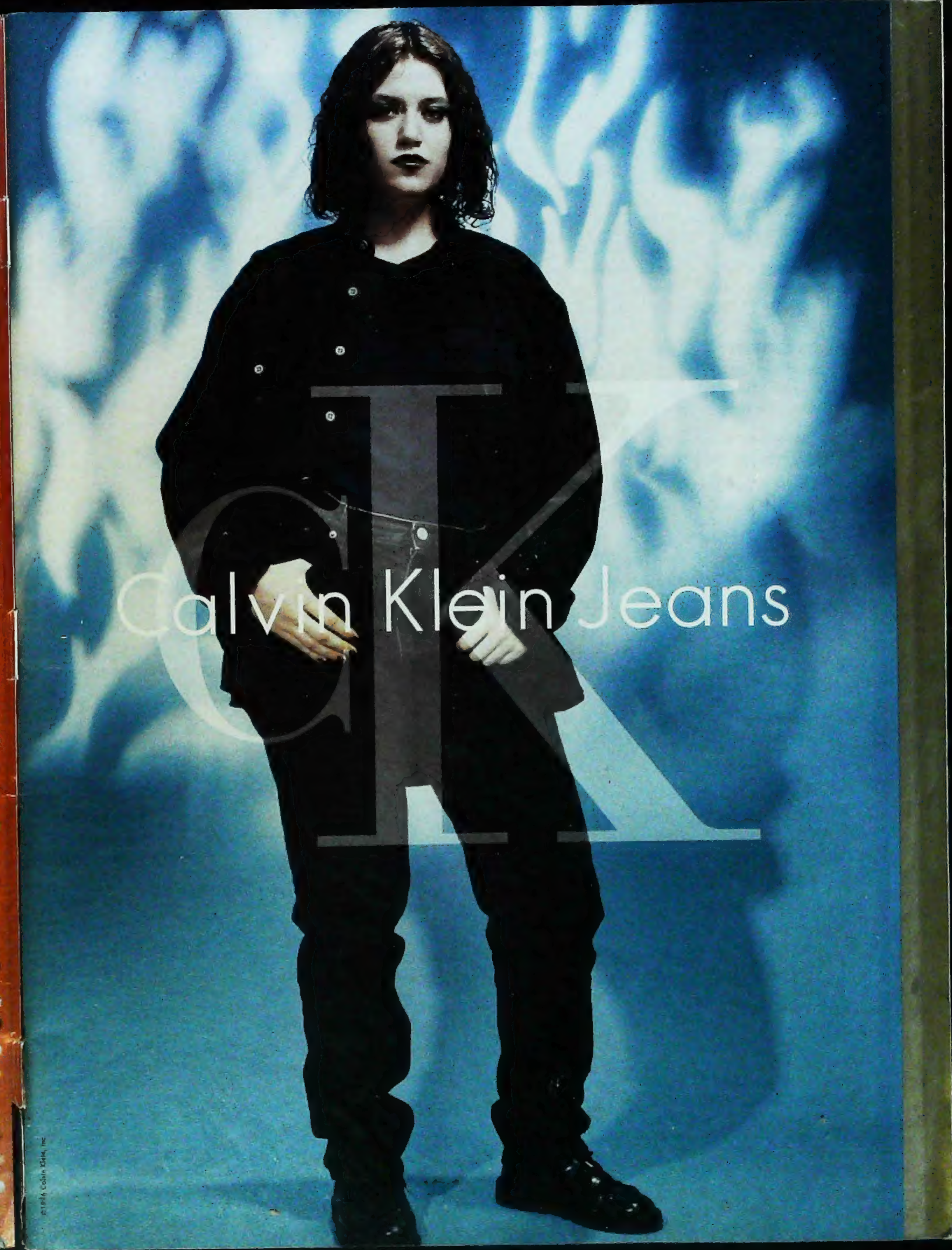
SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE

ALL THE BUZZ ON 121 NEW
MOVIES FROM Tom Hanks
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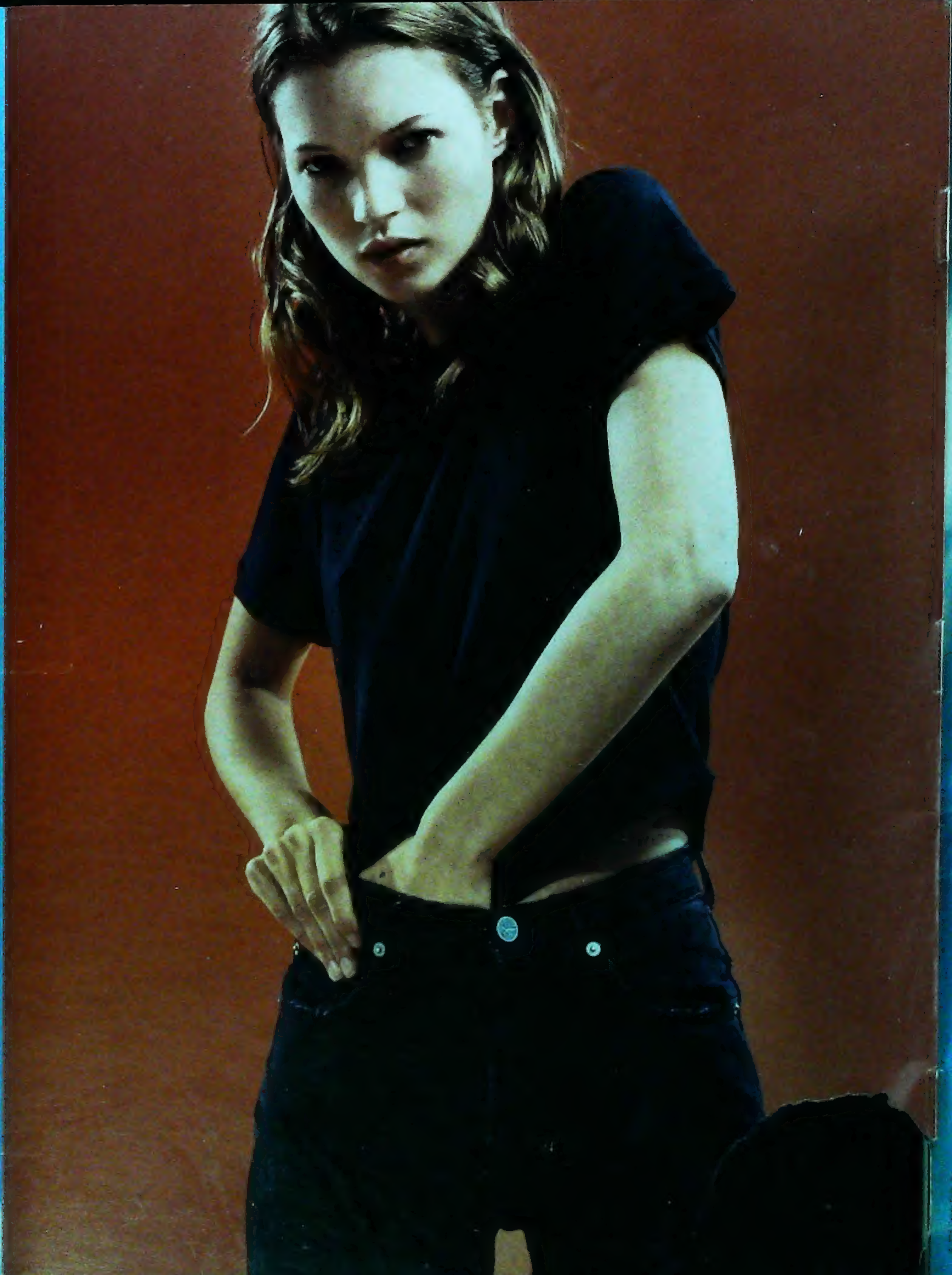
Mel Gibson
in 'Ransom'

Fall Movie Preview

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Entertainment WEEKLY

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23, 1996

NEWS & NOTES

12/Summit Meeting The entertainment world climbs Everest...It's back to work for the Friends...Mars, the new planet Hollywood...HOT SHEET...FLASHES...MONITOR.

24/Biz Robin Williams' return as the Genie in the new *Aladdin* video sequel makes a Disney wish come true.

FEATURES

26/COVER Fall Movie Preview Hollywood loads on the prestige and goes light on the special effects in the final months of the movie year—the ones that will remain freshest in Oscar voters' minds. Here's the scoop on more than 100 films of the risin' fall.

28/September Bette Midler, Goldie Hawn, and Diane Keaton in *The First Wives Club*; also *Surviving Picasso* and *Extreme Measures*.

42/October Tom Hanks tries a new thing—directing—in *That Thing You Do!*; also *Sleepers*, *Michael Collins*, and *The Chamber*.

62/November Winona Ryder acts Puritan for *The Crucible*; also *101 Dalmatians*, *Ransom*, and *Star Trek: First Contact*.

82/December Jack Nicholson goes alien with Tim Burton's *Mars Attacks!*; also *Ghosts of Mississippi* and *In Love and War*.

REVIEWS

100/MOVIES OWEN GLEIBERMAN on *The Fan*; also *Kansas City* and *Escape From L.A.* **PLUS:** De Niro; Belafonte.

108/TELEVISION BRUCE FRETTS on why *The Odd Couple* endures. **PLUS:** CBS' latest pitch; *Homeboys in Outer Space*.

115/BOOKS GENE LYONS on Tom Clancy's *Executive Orders*; also the history of *Plastic*. **PLUS:** *Sex and the City*.

121/MUSIC DAVID BROWNE on Pearl Jam's *No Code*; also Cypress Hill's latest. **PLUS:** The Santa Barbara sound.

126/MULTIMEDIA BOB STRAUSS on the new game *Quake*. **PLUS:** David Spade and Robin Williams hit cyberspace.

131/VIDEO TY BURR on a trio of John Malkovich movies. **PLUS:** Bad-guy actor J.T. Walsh; Shirley Jones looks back.

DEPARTMENTS

6/Editor's Note EW's David Hajdu and his *Lush Life*.

8/Mail Summer songs, *A Time to Kill*, and Olympic coverage.

138/Encore Aug. 19, 1989: Malcolm Forbes' 70th in Tangier.

Cover GIBSON ALBERT WATSON. (INSETS, FROM LEFT) BRAD PITT, BRIAN HAMILL, WINONA RYDER, BRIGITTE LACOMBE, CHRIS O'DONNELL, FRANÇOIS DUHAMEL, SANDRA BULLOCK, ALEX BAILEY, TOM HANKS, MARK BELINGER, WHITNEY HOUSTON, DAVID LEE

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PHOTOGRAPH BY RAFAEL FUCHS

EW ONLINE

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◆ **Autumn tease:** Anxious to see the fall flicks after reading EW's preview? Chat with our film crew Wednesday, Aug. 21, at 4 p.m. EDT on AOL, and get the latest inside buzz.

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PRIVATE PARTS: New York newspaper columnist Candace Bushnell kisses and tells all in her new book, *Sex and the City*

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Making Music

EW general
editor David
Hajdu hits a
high note with
'Lush Life'

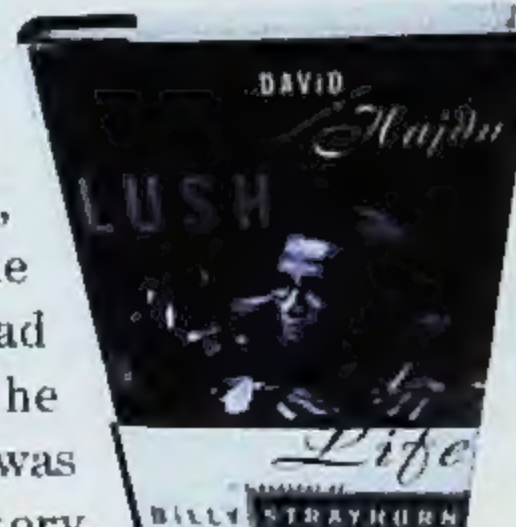
ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY staffers have published an impressive number of books during the magazine's short life—in fact, I'm suspicious about how they find the time. But the latest has made quite a noise in publishing circles. General editor David Hajdu's *Lush Life* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, \$27.50), a biography of jazz musician Billy Strayhorn, is the first in-depth look at the graceful man who shied from the limelight, working intimately with Duke Ellington as ace songwriter and arranger from 1939 until his death in 1967. It was Strayhorn who wrote Ellington's signature song "Take the 'A' Train," as well as such standards as "Lush Life" and "Something to Live For," but because the jazzman chose to live his life quietly—yet openly—as a homosexual, few people outside his world knew just how important Strayhorn was to music.

Now they will. The result of more than 400 interviews conducted over 11 years, *Lush Life* has received glowing reviews and made the *Los Angeles Times* best-seller list. Movie rights have been optioned by screenwriter Jay Cocks (*The Age of Innocence*, the upcoming *Titanic*); Irwin Winkler (*Rocky*, *GoodFellas*) has come aboard as producer.

Hajdu, 41, a passionate scholar of jazz, came to EW in November 1990 as our video section's senior editor. He now supervises EW's video and multimedia coverage, our parents' guides, and the EW Metro section.

"Over 30 of the people I interviewed have since died," says Hajdu, who traveled from his Manhattan home as far afield as Paris

and St. Croix to seek out Strayhorn's friends and associates. "The most rewarding part for me is to feel that I'm honoring a time in music history that was disappearing even as I wrote." Of course, it's also rewarding that his children—Jacob, 13, and Victoria, 10—now know the words to "Take the 'A' Train," as well as what Dad was doing all those nights when he wasn't chronicling pop culture: He was preserving a classic part of its history.



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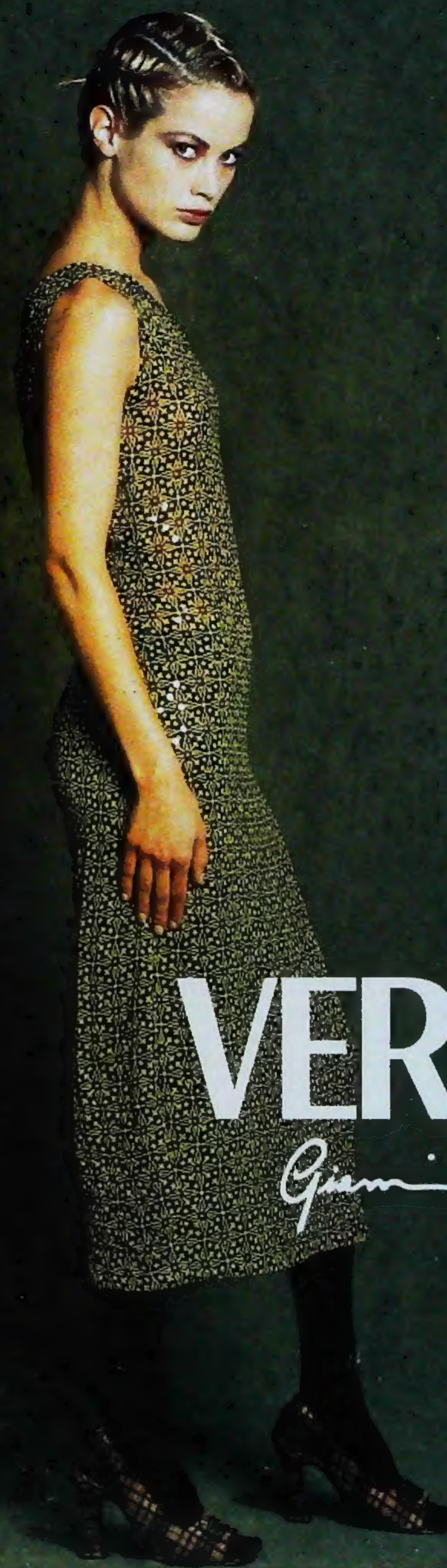
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PHOTOGRAPH BY KWAKU ALSTON



VERSUS
Gianni Versace

MAIL

SOUNDING OFF

NOW THAT you've given us your picks for "The 100 Greatest Summer Songs" (#338, Aug. 2), don't you think you should compile the tunes onto a CD and offer it as a special bonus with an ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY subscription? Sounds like the perfect marketing ploy to me.

JENNIFER L. SMITH
JenniferTC@aol.com
Traverse City, Mich.

HOW CAN YOU have the 100 Greatest Summer Songs without Chad and Jeremy's "A Summer Song"?

JOHN T. KORSMO
Bismarck, N.D.

NO JIMMY Buffett? Was the selection crew wasted away in Margaritaville?

TED KWIATKOWSKI
Iselin, N.J.

I COWROTE "Summer in the City" at 15, about being trapped in New York when I normally would've been at camp. My



brother, John, kept my chorus and wrote the verses, and Lovin' Spoonful bassist Steve Boone added the bridge. Thanks for putting it at the top of your list.

MARK SEBASTIAN
New York City

SHERYL CROW's "All I Wanna Do" is one of the 100 Greatest Summer

Songs? Why didn't you just include "Stuck in the Middle With You" by Stealers Wheel? Crow "borrowed" the entire melody, including the breaks, from that song.

THOMAS R. ZITTANAN
Chicago

A STITCH IN 'TIME'

THANKS FOR the only honest review I've seen of the overblown film *A Time to Kill*. As a native Southerner approaching my 50th year, I recognized the sights and sounds of this movie, and they're distinctly from the 1950s. To imply that the South is still like this in the 1990s is an insult. As long as filmmakers,

and the media in general, continue to portray racism as a Southern anomaly, our racial problems will never be solved.

LINDA ENTERKIN
Pensacola, Fla.

NO 'BONES' ABOUT IT

DANA KENNEDY, you were far too kind! I too have tried to wade through Anne Rice's rambling, disconnected, mind-numbing works, and I will never understand her success as an author. Thanks to your review, I'll listen to my instincts and allow *Servant of the Bones* to rest in peace on someone else's bookshelf.

M.L. FRANCIS
Rego Park, N.Y.

JINGO ALL THE WAY

THE GOLD medal for Olympic commentary goes to Lisa Schwarzbaum for her excellent "Patriot Games." She summed up the feelings of so many of us who watched the Games with awe but winced at the jingoism of the news coverage.

LESLIE MIZELL
Greensboro, N.C.

CORRECTIONS: MSNBC's website did report the 8:48 p.m. crash of TWA Flight 800 at 9 p.m. Eastern time, not at midnight, as we had originally stated (Multimedia). Also, while the Doors released an album track of "Light My Fire" that was more than 6½ minutes long, the single that topped the charts was about 3 minutes long.

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY welcomes reader mail. Address letters to ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY, 1675 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10019. E-mail can be sent to letters@ew.com, or from ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY ONLINE on the America Online service (keyword: EW). All correspondence must include your name, address, and daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.

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A LETTER OF APOLOGY

THEY SAY THAT IMITATION is the sincerest form of flattery, and if that is the case then I have paid Mark Harris a genuine compliment by incorporating so much of his excellent interview with Jodie Foster, published in ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY April 2, 1993, into chapter 13 of my book, *Jodie Foster: A Life in Film*. Sadly and inexplicably, I did not credit Mr. Harris or ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY, and for this I am truly sorry. I understand that permission to use Mr. Harris' work might not necessarily have been granted, but I would like to stress that I would not deliberately "rip off" another journalist. I apologize unreservedly to Mr. Harris and ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY and to Miss Foster and sincerely hope that my apology will be accepted. I also hope that Miss Foster will understand that she can still trust ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY in the future and that neither the publication nor Mr. Harris was aware of my inappropriate use of their material.

PHILIPPA KENNEDY
London

EDITOR'S NOTE: Kennedy used material from ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY without permission and passed it off as her own, giving readers of her book the false impression that she had met with Foster and other of Mark Harris' sources. (In fact, Foster and others refused to be interviewed for the book.) EW does not tolerate such misappropriation and has required the apology above and a monetary settlement from Kennedy.

GIORGIO ARMANI

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NEWS & NOTES

AUGUST 23, 1996 • MOVIES, TV, BOOKS, MUSIC, MULTIMEDIA & VIDEO • EDITED BY MAGGIE MURPHY



Peak Performance

Mount Everest is taking Hollywood to an all-time high. BY DEGEN PENER

NEVER BEFORE HAD Mount Everest been wired the way it was last spring. On May 10, when eight climbers died in a surprise blizzard atop the world's highest peak, news echoed fast. No fewer than three Internet hookups buzzed with on-the-scene reports.

And that was just the beginning of the media avalanche. As the survivors heal, one of the most tragic Everest expeditions in history is turning into a race to the newsstand, the bookshelf, and the screen—small, big, and IMAX. "It's like being on a runaway train and not knowing how to get off," says Aspen ski patroller Charlotte Fox, one of the rescued climbers now being inundated with offers for their stories, photos, and video footage.

"I've been overwhelmed by the amount of interest," says "Seaborn" Beck

Weathers, who lost his right hand and the fingers of his left hand to frostbite, "but that's a secondary concern. I've focused on my recovery."

Already, six magazines—*Men's Journal*, *Vanity Fair*, *Outside*, *Vogue*, *LIFE*, and

Newsweek—have run covers or feature stories on the tragic climb. A team working on an IMAX-format film reached the top two weeks after the tragedy with a 35-pound camera. Their film is due in spring 1998. According to a source, Villard paid \$500,000 for a book by summit survivor and *Outside* contributing writer Jon Krakauer. ABC News, which snapped up so much video footage it beat NBC to the punch, promises a one-hour

Turning Point in the fall.

And then there's *29,028 Feet Above the Sea*, or whatever Universal chooses to call its big-budget Everest movie planned for summer '98. Three weeks ago, the studio—in a \$450,000 sale that also drew the interest of New Line, Disney, and producer **Jerry Bruckheimer**—bought rights to journalist Peter Wilkinson's *Men's Journal* article, which ICM's Danny Greenberg packaged with the stories of Neal Beidleman and Anatoli

Boukreev, two expedition guides credited with heroically saving lives. Although no stars have yet climbed on, **Roger Donaldson**, who is currently shooting Universal's volcano-disaster film *Dante's Peak* with **Pierce Brosnan**, will direct. "Everest has always been of interest to me," says Donaldson, "ever since I went to base camp in the early 1970s with Edmund Hil-

lary. I know just how hard it is to breathe at 20,000 feet." He hopes to start shooting next summer on Everest as well as other, more actor-friendly mountains.

Since Donaldson would like to avoid the situation he's facing with *Dante's Peak* (the similarly themed *Volcano* is under way at Fox), Universal is trying to snap up rights to the stories of more climbers who were on Everest that day. But that hasn't iced the possibility of rival projects. HBO is negotiating to develop Krakauer's book into a TV movie. (HBO had no comment.) And there's TV and film interest in Jennet Conant's unflattering *Vanity Fair* pro-



DANTE'S BROSAN



TIBET'S PITT

file of Everest survivor and New York socialite **Sandy Hill**, whose memoir will be published by Chronicle Books in '98. Though the makers of the Universal film vow the story won't lay blame for the deaths, the mountaineering community is wary. "I think the movie's going to present climbers as complete idiots who were getting what they deserved. That is not the case," says Fox, who was among those rescued by Beidleman and Boukreev. She has declined to sign with the studio and is steering clear of any and all movie projects.

Will Everest pique moviegoers' interest? High-altitude films have a mixed record at the box office. While 1993's *Alive* gobbled up a surprising \$37 million, 1992's *K2* gasped with just \$3 million. Plus, *Seven Years in Tibet*, with **Brad Pitt** as an Austrian climber who befriends the Dalai Lama, is due in late '97 and is likely to offer stiff competition.

Either way, the media attention could spell the permanent demystification of a summit that was first successfully scaled by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay just 43 years ago. As David Breashears says of his IMAX film: "You can say this film, pardon the pun, will take you right to the top of Everest." And with Everest having taken the lives of 142 climbers who've tried to master it, this may be all the reality anyone really needs. ♦

Labor Relations

THE SIGN ON Central Perk now says, "Open for Business." NBC's *Friends* (who are demanding \$100,000 per episode) returned to the set Aug. 12. But even as the cast attended a read-through for the first two episodes, a new contract had not been signed. "There is no deal," said a Warner Bros. spokesman at press time. The actors had no comment on the negotiations, but the studio reportedly offered each star \$80,000 an episode with raises every year. Though it was, um, a friendly reading, no one apparently whistled while they worked. —Jessica Shaw



GREEN GIANTS: The Must See sextet are reunited

PLANET HOLLYWOOD

Those schlocky '50s films were right—there was life on Mars. That the newly discovered aliens turned out to be harmless microscopic bugs instead of beasts with humongous throbbing brains may have been anticlimactic for some, but Hollywood is rolling out the red (planet) carpet for our new Martian friends:

♦ **3RD ROCK FROM THE SUN** NBC's alien comedy will crack a couple of topical jokes in its season opener, airing Sept. 22. ("Next time you have a picnic on another planet, clean up!") Jests executive producer Terry Turner: "I couldn't ask for more. We feel validated."

♦ **DARK SKIES** NBC's new *X-Files*-esque drama will work references to the discovery into its story lines and promos. "It's like this dropped out of the sky just for our show," says cocreator Bryce Zabel.

♦ **MARS ATTACKS!** Warner Bros. won't comment on whether director Tim Burton will go back to make any last-minute changes on his sci-fi comedy. But a new press release boasts, "Warner Bros. will offer definitive proof of life on the Angry Red Planet on Friday, Dec. 13 with the release of...*Mars Attacks!*"

♦ **MARS LIVES** B-movie king Roger Corman was one of the first on the case. "The second we heard, we rushed a Mars project into development," says Darin Spillman, VP of production at Corman's Concorde/New Horizons studio. The \$20 million flick will follow a group of space explorers who awaken a dormant and hostile Martian race. —Chris Nashawaty, with additional reporting by Dan Snierson



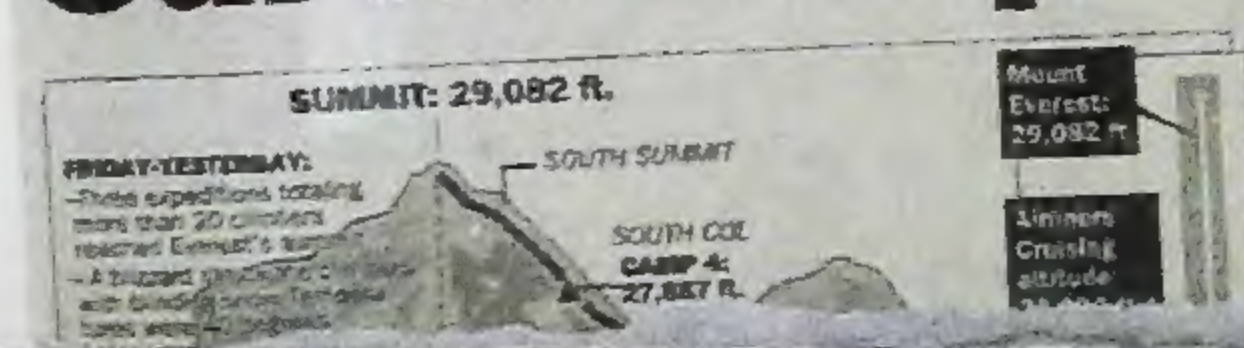
RED ROVERS: 3rd Rockers, top, look to the fourth rock; Mars cards

Everest death

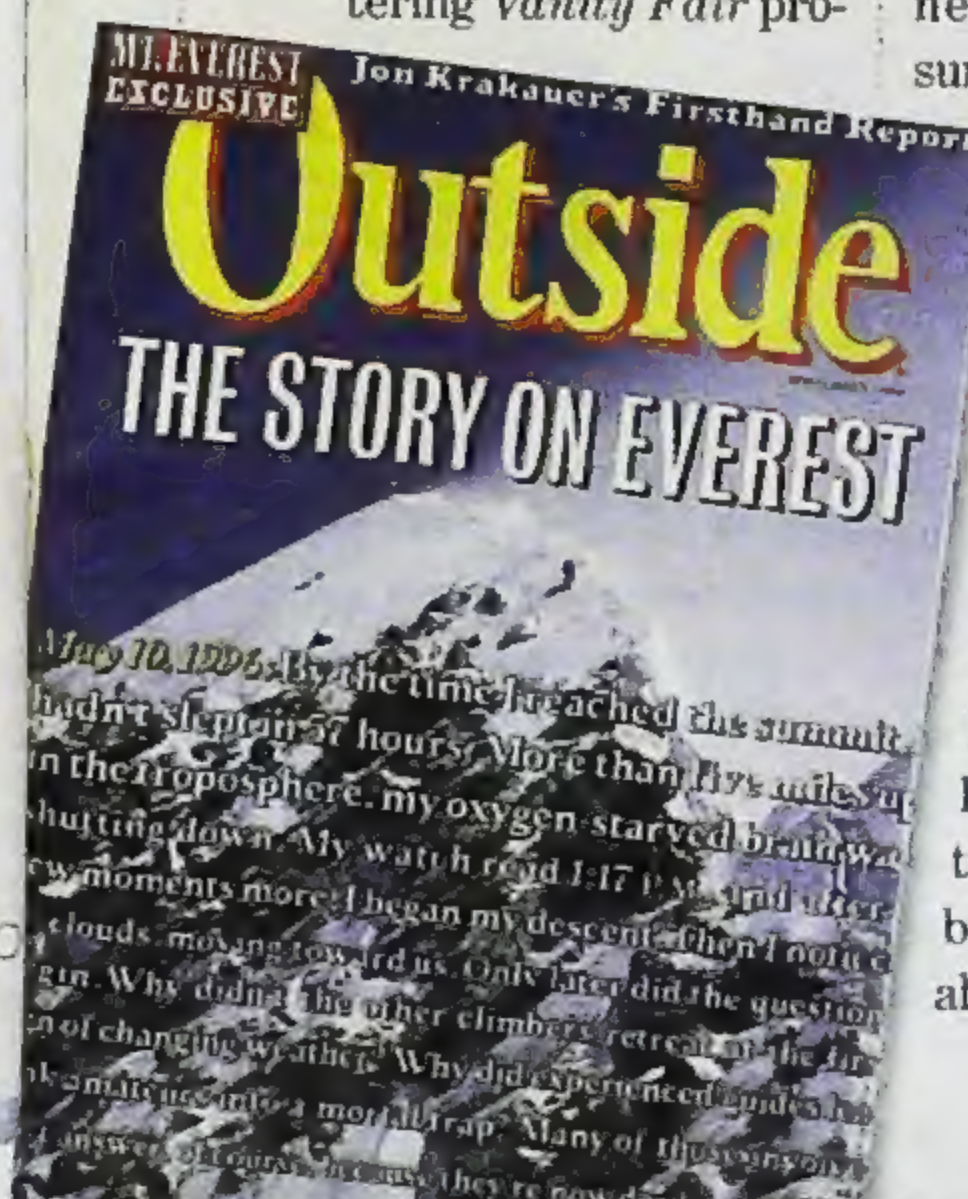
DEATH ON ROOF OF THE WORLD

Survivors quit Everest

8 climbers left entombed in ice



By PAUL SCHWARTZMAN



Jim Mullen's Hot Sheet

What the country is talking about this week...

1 A VERY BRADY SEQUEL Where they are all tragically killed by a disgruntled postal worker. Well, one can dream.

2 LIFE ON MARS They found some, but it wasn't intelligent. Maybe it came from their capital.

3 JACK KEMP Bob Dole's bold, bold choice for VP. Reaching out to middle-aged, well-to-do, gray-haired white guys in suits.

4 REPLACE The fat-free additive that's supposed to make skim milk taste like whole milk. But from what animal?

5 THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU Mad scientist Marlon Brando performs his evil experiments on animals. Has PETA heard about this?



6 THE TO DI SHOW NBC has offered Princess Diana \$5.8 million to be a morning reporter. Britain will get Willard Scott and a blond to be named later.

7 THE FAN Psycho Robert De Niro stalks baseball player Wesley Snipes. *Cape Fear of Dreams.*

8 TORI SPELLING Voted worst hair on television. And the only nominee to write an acceptance speech.

9 CHRISTIE BRINKLEY She's announced plans to get married again. Of course, to her, "Mind if I cut in?" is a proposal.

10 SHE'S THE ONE A man tries to divorce Jennifer Aniston in order to chase his brother's ex-fiancée. Gee, it sounds more like a Christmas movie.

11 PEPSI Some guy is suing because they won't award him a Harrier jet. C'mon, everyone else settled for ICBMs.

12 AMERICA OFFLINE AOL wants its service to be as reliable as the telephone or electric company's. So we can expect this to happen a lot.

13 CALVIN KLEIN After Obsession, Eternity, and cK one, the recently separated designer has launched a new fragrance: Enough Already and Get Out.

14 DONALD TRUMP He plans to erect the world's tallest building. Unlike most people, who want to keep their feelings of inadequacy a secret.

15 THE BIG BABY There's a 68-pound, 18-month-old child running around out there. Is Kerri Strug missing?

Face Value

THOSE MEDIA darlings du jour, **Matthew McConaughey** and **Gwyneth Paltrow**, have been so hastily anointed as superstars by the press, it's easy to forget that when it comes to actual grassroots recognition, there's very little there. So we decided to perform our own little reality check: We showed photos of *A Time to Kill*'s McConaughey and *Emma*'s Paltrow to a number of passersby in New York City's Times Square and asked people to identify the pair. Among the responses: —*Anna Holmes*

"I don't know who he is. She's Brad Pitt's girlfriend."

—*Agathe, 22, movie theater employee, New York City*

"He looks like that guy who was a DJ and also an actor, Jay Thomas. She's Brad Pitt's girlfriend."

—*Tom, 43, production manager, Pasadena, Calif.*

"He looks like a businessman. She looks like the woman in *Pretty Woman* with brown hair, Julia Roberts."

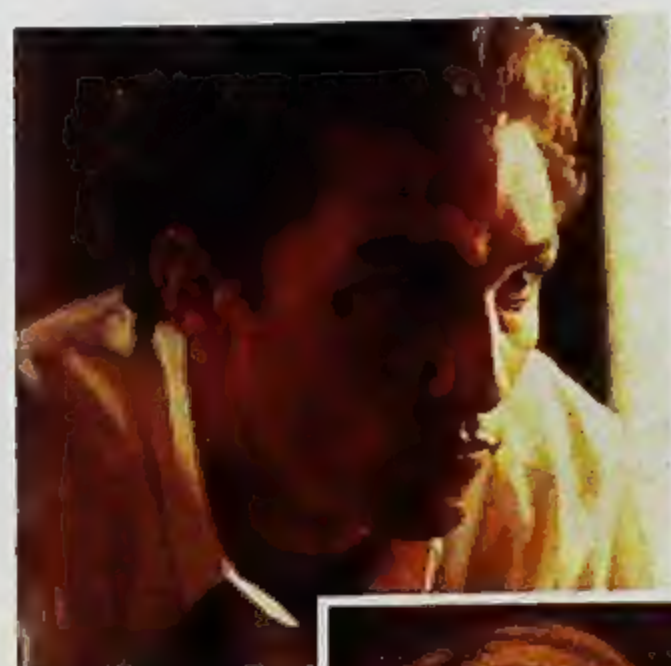
—*Patrick, 31, engineer, New York City*

"He's a model on calendars and stuff. She looks like Cindy Crawford."

—*Tasheen, 14, student, New York City*

"He looks like Luke Perry. She looks like a model."

—*Mark, 18, drugstore cashier, Long Island*



WHO AM I?

NAME GAME: McConaughey (above) and Paltrow fool the people



"He looks like the guy in that movie we just saw, *A Time to Kill*. She's a model, and she does some acting stuff."

—*Jabari, 23, musician, New York City*

"I don't know who they are except that he looks like her."

—*Linda, 23, student, New York City*

Pop Goes the Easel



Even the tiny things are done in a big way at DreamWorks. When it came time to create the logo for its fledgling record label, DreamWorks music head Mo Ostin didn't just settle on any old doodle: He commissioned Pop artist Roy Lichtenstein. Quite a decision, since the painter's comic-strip canvases generally

fetch millions and are rarely relegated to the corner of anything. The Lichtenstein logo appears with no fanfare on the new DreamWorks release by the eels, an L.A. trio. But Lichtenstein thinks it's no work of art. "It was a favor to Mo," he says. "It took three minutes." Lichtenstein wouldn't say what he was paid, but confirms he now gets free George Michael albums. —*Tiarra Mukherjee*



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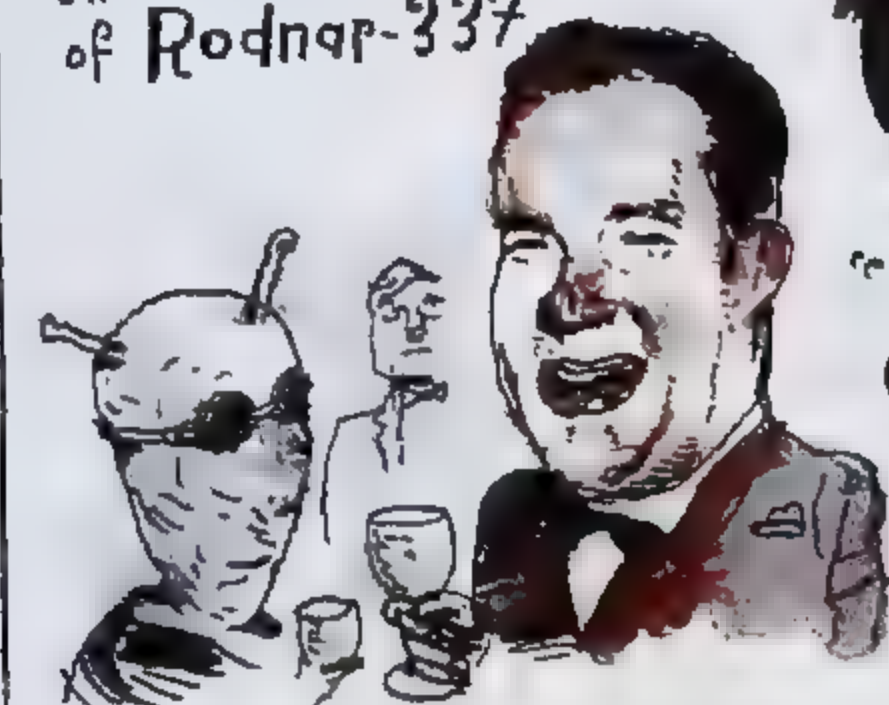
Sharon Stone charms the Runkle-5's off of Rodnar-337



"I love his music," says Opherk-22 of Bob Dylan (left). "I just can't understand what he's saying half the time"



"Raw fish tastes like grungdv-12," declares author-actor Kondak-JP2 as Steve Martin looks on



Über-agent Kithoth-5JJ60 chats up hot property Tom Hanks



"Ready for my close-up, Meathead," quips Klignid-97 to Rob Reiner

M O N I T O R

ENGAGEMENTS Oasis lead singer **Liam Gallagher**, 23, and actress **Patsy Kensit**, 28, will tie the knot in London. It'll be Gallagher's first marriage, and the third for Kensit (*Angels & Insects*); her divorce from Simple Minds frontman Jim Kerr should soon be final. No wedding date has been set.... Former *Murder One* actor **Daniel Benzali**, 47, and actress **Kim Cattrall**, 39, announced plans to marry in the spring. It will be Benzali's second marriage and Cattrall's third.

ARRESTED On Aug. 2, Margaret Ray, better known as David Letterman's creepy No. 1 fan, was arrested for shoplifting and resisting arrest near the Carmel, Ind., home of the late-night host's mom, Dorothy. Ray, who's been arrested seven times since stealing Letterman's Porsche in 1988, said she was unaware that Letterman's mother lived so near. Speaking of stalkers, actor Scott Bakula got a temporary

restraining order Aug. 2 against Tina Marie Ledbetter—the same woman convicted of making terrorist threats against Michael J. Fox in 1989. The court order states that Ledbetter must stay at least 200 yards away from Bakula, his ex-wife, Krista Neumann, and his girlfriend, actress Chelsea Field.



TORMÉ



CRUISE

CONVICTED Def Leppard drummer **Richard Allen**, 32, pleaded guilty Aug. 6 in L.A. to beating his wife. The one-armed musician was sentenced to 30 days on a graffiti-removal crew, and ordered to film and pay for MTV public-service spots admitting his crime.

WINNERS Question his virility all you want, but never say that **Tom Cruise** isn't a man of action. On Aug. 5, Cruise helped rescue five people from a boat fire off the Italian island of Capri. Cruise, his wife, **Nicole Kidman**, and their two children were vacationing aboard a yacht in the Tyrrhenian Sea when they aided the fire victims. Cruise made headlines for helping a woman hit by a car in Santa Monica, Calif., last year and—on a separate occasion—for rescuing a young boy who was being crushed by a crowd of onlookers at the July 4 London premiere of *Mission: Impossible*.

RECOVERING Singer **Mel Tormé**, 70, suffered a mild stroke Aug. 8 at his Beverly Hills home. Tormé's publicist says the Velvet Fog is in stable condition and recovering at an L.A. hospital. Tormé had been at work on an Ella Fitzgerald tribute album. —Chris Nashawaty and Anna Holmes

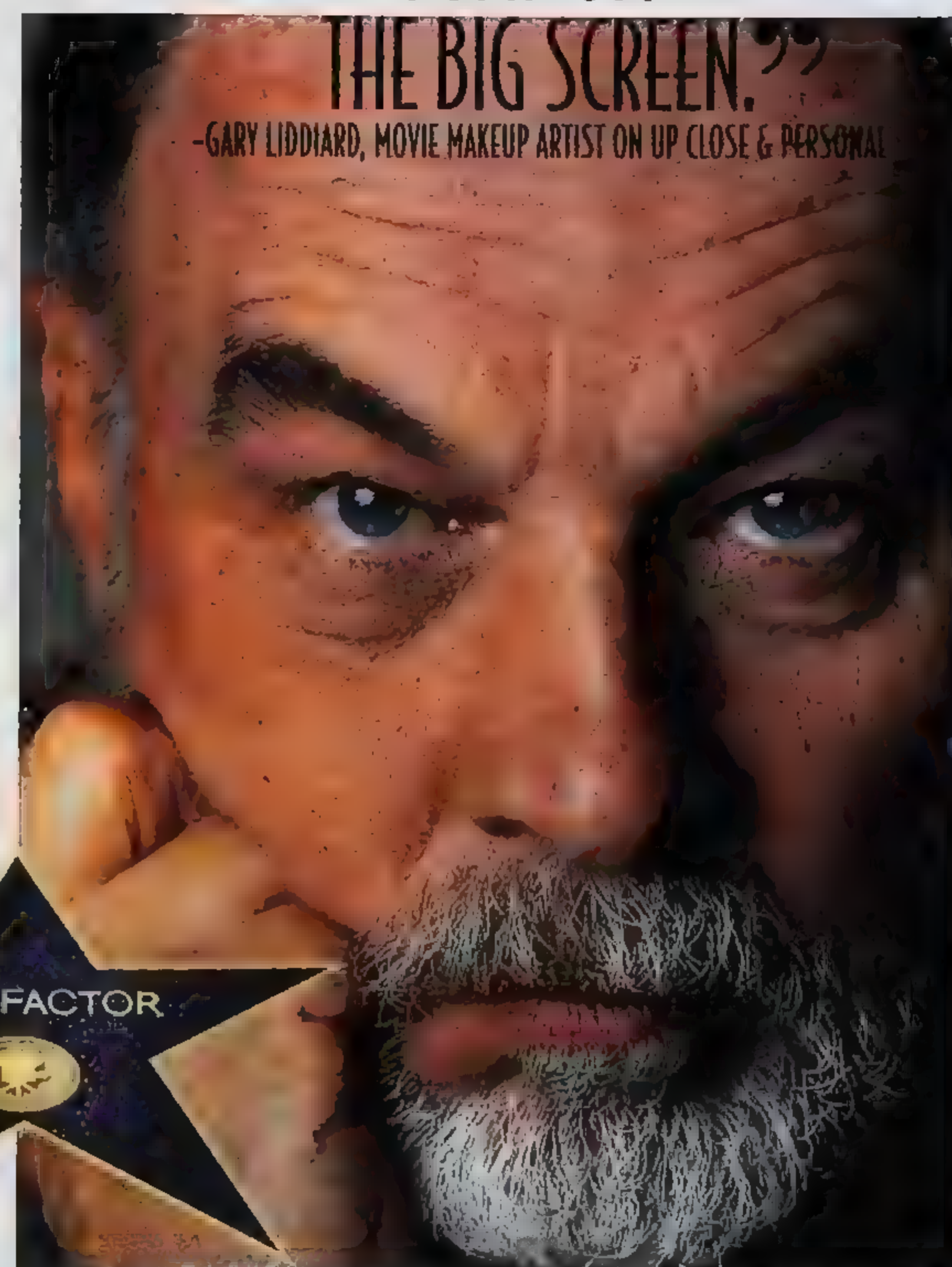
ILLUSTRATION BY BARRY BLITT

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	AGATHA CHRISTIE MYSTERIES: Poitrot	MYSTERY MOVIE: Cracker	AMERICAN JUSTICE: The Menendez Brothers	ANCIENT MYSTERIES: Ancient Altered States	SCREENING ROOM: Great Balls of Fire	INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS: LA County Coroner

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FLASHES

BACK TO BACK:

This fall, Tuesday night will be family feud night—if you're a member of *Back to the Future's* McFly clan. Marty McFly, a.k.a. **Michael J. Fox**, will star in the new ABC sitcom *Spin City* at 9:30 p.m. Pitted against him on NBC is *Caroline in the City*, which stars Fox's movie mom, Lorraine McFly, better known as **Lea Thompson**. For fans of

the 1985 film, it's a scheduling conflict even Doc Brown couldn't resolve. "It's one of those things about television where a product is created not only to inspire and entertain the viewer but also to destroy something else," says Fox of going mano à mama. "I'm not real comfortable with that mind-set, so I try not to think about it." The newly coiffed Thompson, however, says that in Hollywood "there's room for everybody. I had a feeling they would put him opposite my show—that's their best slot." But, she adds, "he's my son, so I can't feel that competitive." If only CBS gave **Crispin Glover**—i.e., George McFly—a sitcom. Then we'd unravel some real family ties. —*Jessica Shaw*

STARS CROSSED:

Money isn't everything. *Friends'* **David Schwimmer** has other worries, too. Specifically, the TV romance between the show's requited lovers: his hangdog Ross and **Jennifer Aniston's** peppy Rachel. "They should break up," says Schwimmer. "What I would like to see happen is that reality sets in, and Ross realizes that Rachel doesn't really know who she is or what she wants to do with her life." Fans will have to wait for the Sept. 19 season premiere to find out whether he'll be there for her. In the meantime, Schwimmer has been keeping busy on the Chicago set of his directorial debut, *Dogwater*, about a group of, uh, friends attending their 10-year high school reunion. "It's a low-budget movie," says Schwimmer of the Miramax project due in 1997, "but what we lack in money we're making up for in enthusiasm." Now, there's a plot a network could love.

—*Cindy Pearlman*

SEEKING DIRECTION: Schwimmer



FUTURE STARS: Thompson (left) and Fox are competing City dwellers

FREEZE FRAMES:

Not even ice cream is safe from Hollywood's clutches. Scan the 31 flavors at your neighborhood Baskin-Robbins these days, and you'll find the "Somebody Stop Me" Twist, a pineapple-and-sour-apple ice tied to the *Mask* cartoon series. The entertainment-based concoctions—which in the past have included Red, White, and Boo! (*Casper*)

and Little Bear Crunch (*The Indian in the Cupboard*)—are the handiwork of the ice cream company's "flavor committee," 15 execs who meet twice a month to consider suggestions submitted by franchise owners and customers and to choose flavors for entertainment tie-ins. Tune in next March for a flavor pegged to **Jim Carrey's** *Liar, Liar*. "We heard **Steven Spielberg** loved the *Casper* flavor when we sent it over to Amblin," says Baskin-Robbins spokeswoman Judy Karlin. "So I'm sure we'll be sending plenty to Jim." —*Scott Maiko*

THE UNMIGHTY QUINN:

When **Aidan Quinn** and **Liam Neeson** journeyed to Ireland last summer to shoot *Michael Collins*, **Nell Jordan's** October epic about the controversial IRA founder, they met with ample enthusiasm from the Irish—sometimes *too much* enthusiasm. During a scene where Neeson (who plays Collins) is shepherd by Quinn (who plays a fellow revolutionary) through a seething mob, Quinn encountered a rather motivated group of local extras. "We had some big, burly Irish army soldiers who were playing the British, and they decided to knock me over in every take," he says. "It got a little bit out of control. They were supposed to just pretend to knock me over, but I was getting bashed and kicked." Quinn soon discovered the source of their zeal. "There was a pub on the corner," he explains, "so between each take they were downing a couple of pints." Talk about Method acting. —*Jeff Gordinier*

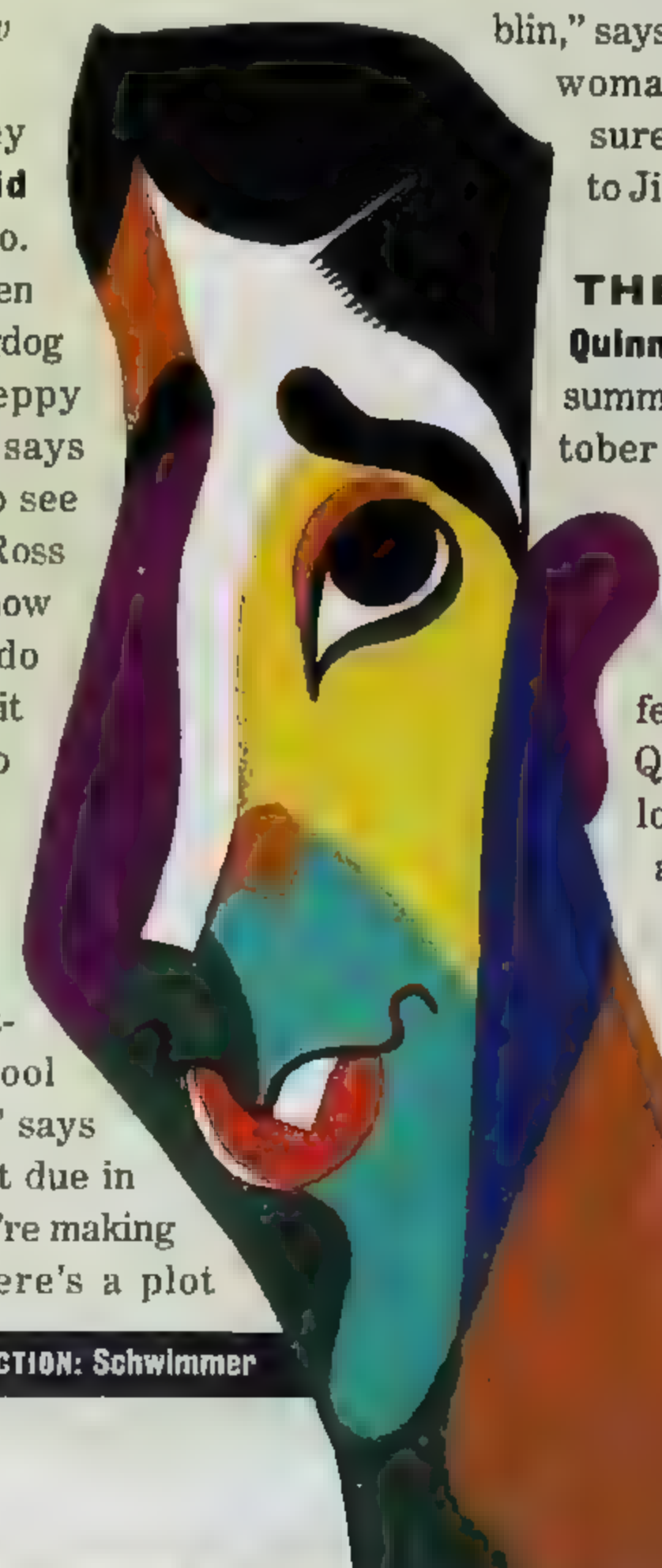


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Wish Fulfillment

With its new direct-to-video 'Aladdin' sequel, Disney conjures a King's ransom. BY STEVE DALY

BIZ

WHO FUELED the biggest opening-week hit of the summer, the aliens of *ID4*—or Robin Williams of *A3*? Do the math, and *Aladdin and the King of Thieves*—the Walt Disney Company's second direct-to-video sequel to *Aladdin*, released on Aug. 13—appears to beat the record-breaking

gross of *Independence Day*.

Howzat? Well, *ID4* took in \$81.5 million at the box office in its first five days. Industry sources estimate that *King of Thieves* will have sold about 6 million copies in its own five-day bow. With the public paying an average of \$16 per tape at retail giants like Wal-Mart (where Disney does 60 percent of its video business) and at video stores, that translates to an extraterrestrial-whupping "gross" of \$96 million. "It's the appetite of the video marketplace," says Ann Daly, president of Disney's Buena Vista Home Video. "The size in consumer dollars is

something like three times [the theatrical market]."

Keen to outdo its previous *Aladdin* follow-up, *The Return of Jafar* (which sold 4.6 million copies its first week, even with *The Simpsons*' Dan Castellaneta subbing for Williams), Disney is touting Williams' return on billboards and on the sides of buses. In total, it has orchestrated \$70 million in cross-promotional efforts. "That's the kind of campaign usually associated with a movie expected to do \$100 million box office," says Tania Moloney, VP of Buena Vista Home Video publicity.

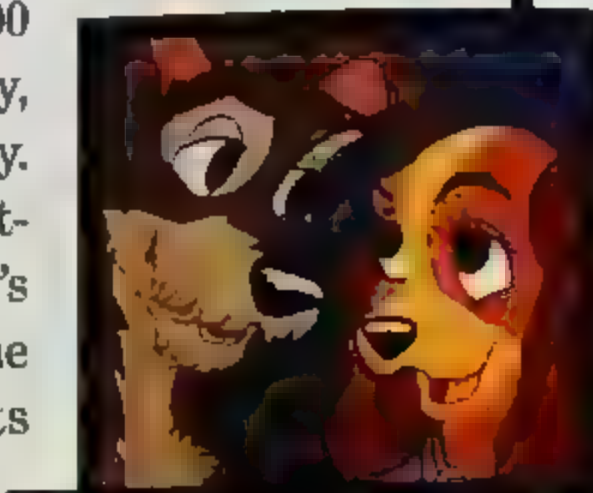
Why push so hard to build up a direct-to-video title? Perhaps because Disney's home-video future may depend on it. The studio has now hawked virtually all its theatrical animated chestnuts, from *Snow White* to *Pocahontas*, at least once on video. And though the company limits availability to stoke demand, future reissues could bring diminishing returns. But fate smiled on Disney when Tad Stones, a producer-director in its TV animation division, suggested turning the planned TV special *Return of Jafar* into a VHS premiere—and struck gold. "Direct-to-video was where you dumped things," says Stones, who also helmed *King of Thieves*. "Nobody expected that kind of interest."

But Disney's windfall isn't prompting many imitators. "It only works with a proven franchise," says Leonard Maltin, animation scholar and author of *The Disney Films*.

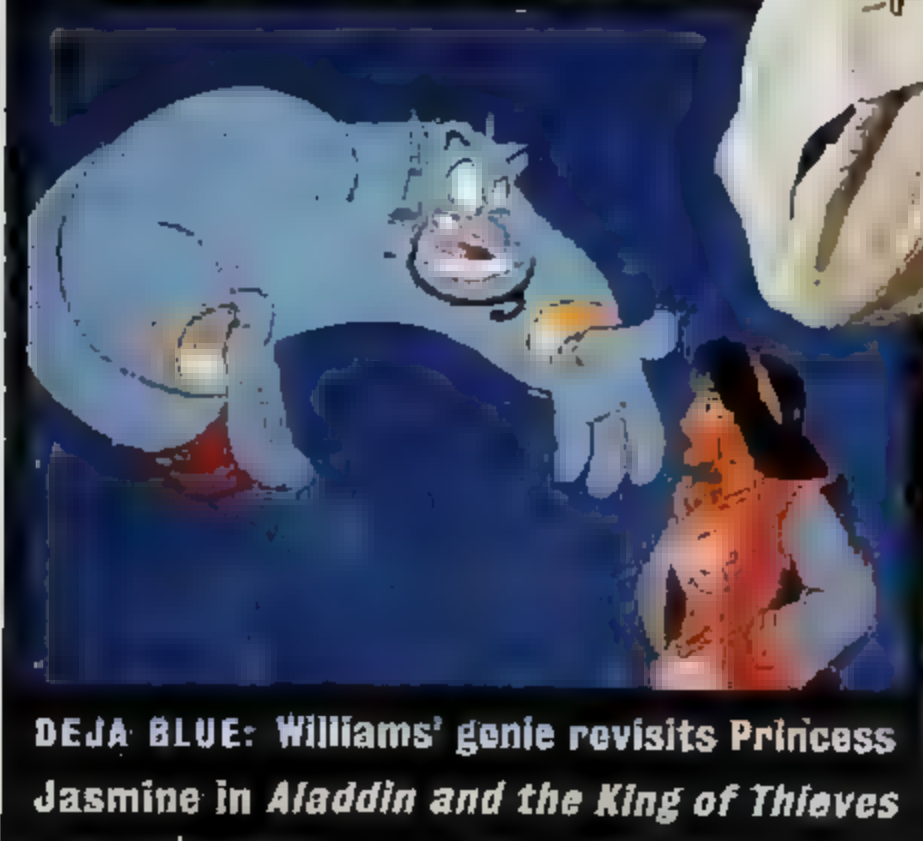
Though MCA/Universal scored with two direct-to-video *Land Before Time* sequels—which have sold more than 3 million copies each—the numbers for live-action video debuts, such as the company's *Darkman II: The Return of Durant*, have been less than one tenth that size.

Besides, children's titles rule the video sales charts, and no company has more popular characters to exploit than Disney: A *Lion King* direct-to-video sequel is in production; a *Beauty and the Beast* Christmas story is finished; follow-ups to *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids*, *Lady and the Tramp*, and *101 Dalmatians* are in development.

Maltin doesn't think much of all these sequels. "I'd as soon see them leave those old films alone," he says. "If you've told a story well, it comes to a conclusion." Sorry, Leonard—Disney's conclusion appears to be, if at first you do succeed, draw, draw again. ♦ (Reporting by Owen MacDonald and Chris Nutter)



SECOND SECONDS: From top, Tramp and Lady, Beauty's Belle, and King's Simba promise returns



DEJA BLUE: Williams' genie revisits Princess Jasmine in *Aladdin and the King of Thieves*

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photo illustrations
by kevin irby

HEY'RE BRILLIANT, THEY'RE famous, and they're dead—and this fall they're coming to a theater near you. In a movie season alive with wonderful possibilities, deceased authors, especially of the classic variety, will undergo enough resurrec-

tions to give George Romero the heebie-jeebies, including Henry James (who returns with *The Portrait of a Lady*); Thomas Hardy (see *Jude*, formerly known as *Jude the Obscure*); Ernest Hemingway (the subject of Sir Richard Attenborough's *In Love and War*); and the undeadest poet of them all, William Shakespeare (who's got four flicks in the works—including Kenneth Branagh's *Hamlet* and an Al Pacino take on *Richard III* called *Looking for Richard*). Of course, not every script this fall was

Fall P Movie review

written by a dead guy. There's also Tim Burton's *Mars Attacks!* (and no, it isn't about microscopic organisms found in a space rock); Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*; Milos Forman's *The People vs. Larry Flynt*; David Mamet's *American Buffalo*; John Grisham's *The Chamber*; Madonna's *Evita*; and—speaking of literary masterpieces—*Beavis and Butt-head Do America*. The upshot: Movies are alive and well this season, even if some of their writers aren't.

STARRING

DIANE KEATON, BETTE MIDLER, GOLDIE HAWN,
ELIZABETH BERKLEY, SARAH JESSICA PARKER,
HEATHER LOCKLEAR, MARCIA GAY HARDEN

The First Wives Club

HUGH
WILSON

DIRECTED BY

THREE LADIES of a certain age who are still reeling from mistreatment by the husbands who have traded them in for lush young things may not seem funny, yet Hawn, Midler, and Keaton turn this tale of women scorned into a

biting revenge comedy (complete with cameo by patron saint Ivana Trump). Old college pals reunited by a cheated-on friend's suicide, the three determine to torture their unfaithful exes (Victor Garber, Dan Hedaya, and Stephen Collins). Their best-laid plans run more smoothly than the movie's production did. Director Wilson stepped in when P.J. Hogan (*Muriel's Wedding*) stepped out, Paul Rudnick was called in for an uncredited polish of the script by Robert Harling (*Steel Magnolia*).

AN OLD
WIVES'
TALE

Keaton, Hawn, and Midler plot revenge on their rotten husbands



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SEPTEMBER

lias), and slow shooting bumped the movie from summer to fall. "They under-schedule you and overwork you, but there was no bulls---," says Hawn, who plays an alcoholic actress unhappy about heading north of her 40s. "I think we've gotten to an age where that disappears."

Alas, the women haven't reached the age (they're all 50) at which stunt work is no longer required; adapting Olivia Goldsmith's novel required the stars to dangle from scaffolding. But "we were there to have a good time," insists Hawn, who, away from her home in L.A. during the three-month Manhattan shoot, made a new best friend in Keaton. "Diane and I would get made up together, whereas



TRIPLE-EX RAIDED

Keaton, Midler, and Hawn as nasty as they want to be

Bette would be made up in her trailer. So much bonding goes on in that trailer."

Included in the club was Elizabeth Berkley, still smarting from *Showgirls*, who had no complaints about her part as the less-than-brilliant ingenue actress muscling in on Hawn's husband. "She wants to be a star," Berkley says of her character. "I don't mind being part of the joke." Not that Berkley took her part lightly. The actress, who was asked to do a deliberately bad reading from *Romeo and Juliet* in her audition, spent much of her downtime picking up tips from her mentors. "She gets a gold star," says Hawn. "That bubbleheaded stuff is hard to do. Guess how I know?" (Sept. 20) **<<BUZZ>>** A woman's woman's movie, and a career-reviving chance for Hawn, Midler, and Keaton to strut their stuff.



Surviving Picasso

ANTHONY HOPKINS

NATASCHA McELHONE

JULIANNE MOORE

JOSS ACKLAND

JOAN PLOWRIGHT

STARRING

HE LOVED TO paint himself in the guise of a bull. But to the women in his life, Pablo Picasso behaved more like a swine. A pathologically manipulative lover, he demanded subservience from his wives (two), mistresses (five), and passing consorts (countless). Such a swath of misbehavior hardly renders a portrait of the artist an easy sell in these prickly, post-Clarence Thomas/Anita Hill times. But then again, Hopkins made even Hannibal the Cannibal kinda charming. That may be why producer Ismail Merchant and director James Ivory, the team behind *Howards End* and *The Remains of the Day*, asked him to take on the title role. "People keep asking 'Why play another monster, a man who treats women so badly?'" says Hopkins. "I don't see it that way. Picasso was a life force, a primitive. His appetites were huge—sexually, artistically, and in every way. If he comes over as an absolute s---, I'm not surprised. But I saw him as a romantic." Besides, reasons the actor, "the door was there. [These women] could have walked." **>>** The heroine of *Surviving Picasso* is, in fact, one that got away—Françoise Gilot, Picasso's longtime mistress, played by 25-year-old London stage actress McElhone. Written by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and based on Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington's biography *Picasso: Creator and Destroyer*, the film chronicles the rocky romance of Gilot and Picasso, which began in Nazi-occupied Paris (he was 62, she was 22) and ended with her stormy departure 10 years and two children later. "I think she figured out early on that it was a game," says McElhone. "If she staved off giving herself to him, he would become hungrier." **>>** The filmmakers were no luckier courting the artist's estate, which denied permission to show key Picasso artworks. Expect to see lots of canvases turned to face walls, and signature pieces like *Guernica* shown only out of focus in the background as works in progress. For crucial scenes, Ivory hired knockoff artists to reproduce some masterpieces. "I'm not going to discuss that," says Ivory of the forgeries. "I will say that we did not infringe their copyrights in any way." (Sept. 20) **<<BUZZ>>** Fine performances (especially from Moore as ex-mistress Dora Maar), lovely scenery. But with the emphasis squarely on Pablo's ugly side, we can't picture long lines for this exhibition.

DIRECTED BY

JAMES IVORY

BOX OFFICE DRAW?

Hopkins (with McElhone as the artist's mistress Gilot) delivers powerful lines as Picasso.

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SEPTEMBER

EXTREME MEASURES

STARRING HUGH GRANT, GENE HACKMAN, SARAH JESSICA PARKER DIRECTED BY MICHAEL APTED

MICHAEL PALMER'S 1991 medical thriller about an idealistic doctor who wanders into the corrupt world of his mentor definitely had cinematic possibilities. But the accent was all wrong. "It was a little too hard-nosed New York," says Grant. "It was f--king this and f--king that in



DOD, ROCK, AND STOCK

(From top) Grant and Parker take Measures; Douglas (left) finds Grace; and Sandler and Wayans team up in the buddy caper Bulletproof

terms of everything. While I wanted to get away from my image, I thought people would run laughing to the exit."

"We rather thought the first movie [that we produced] would be a nice romantic comedy set in England," says producer/girlfriend/supermodel Elizabeth Hurley. "The last thing we imagined was a ruthless thriller set in New York, with a character who was American and unplayable for Hugh." But Grant, Hurley, Apted, and screenwriters William Goldman and

Tony Gilroy went ahead, overhauled the script, and managed to grab Hackman, who reportedly earned between \$3 million and \$4 million as Grant's nemesis. As for coproducing with her cohabitor, Hurley says, "It was good in that I could wake him up at 2:30 a.m. and say, 'Yes! I've got it!' and act out a scene, but he could wake me up at 2:30 a.m. and say, 'I don't like my trailer.'" And Apted, who found himself directing his producer, says there were no problems with Grant: "I called him sir." (Sept. 27) <<BUZZ>> Grant is said to pull off this dramatic role nicely—but this may offer too few weddings and too many funerals for his fans.

BULLETPROOF

STARRING DAMON WAYANS, ADAM SANDLER, JAMES CAAN, KRISTEN WILSON, JAMES FARENTINO DIRECTED BY ERNEST DICKERSON

IT WAS SUPPOSED to be a 48 HRS.-meets-Midnight Run-meets-Lethal Weapon action flick: Wayans got \$3-4 million to play straight man/guardian cop to Sandler, who got \$2.5-3 million to play a nervous drug-cartel stoolie. But Bulletproof's first script, by Joe Gayton (Uncommon Valor), read more like Wayans' superhero spoof Blankman. "There was a scene that had Adam in a car, shackled and handcuffed," says Wayans. "He'd be driving with his feet, shooting out the back window, actually hitting people. Not even Jackie Chan does that." Rewrites by Lewis Colick (Unlawful Entry) toned things down, and the \$25 million production wrapped in May. Then test audiences did some rewriting of their own: When they balked at Sandler's and Wayans' parting, a new ending was shot in one day. What fate now awaits the costars? Jokes Wayans, "Turns out we're lovers." (Sept. 6) <<BUZZ>> With Sandler's piercing shower rendition of "I Will Always Love You" eliciting howls in previews, Universal smells a sequel-ready franchise.

GRACE OF MY HEART

STARRING ILLEANA DOUGLAS, JOHN TURTURRO, MATT DILLON, ERIC STOLTZ, BRUCE DAVISON, PATSY KENSIT DIRECTED BY ALLISON ANDERS

WHAT IF Carole King married Brian Wilson? Those are the kinds of '60s pop archetypes with which Anders (Gas Food Lodging) plays fast and loose in a fictional romantic drama centered on the Brill Building, Manhattan's pop-music haven. Douglas (To Die For) plays a King-like composer who graduates from the song factory—and a succession of wrong men—to her own singing career. "When I'm with each guy, my look becomes sort of

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Grading The Trailers

Is it fair to judge a movie by just two minutes of footage? Of course not. But it's more than fair to judge the trailers themselves. Here are the early reviews:

>> **The First Wives Club** Making equal use of Bette Midler, Goldie Hawn, and Diane Keaton, the trailer has audiences hooting. Particularly enticing is Midler, as she tangles with Sarah Jessica Parker, munches Mallomars, and sings "You Don't Own Me" with her costars. But the clincher is Ivana Trump's cameo advice to the three amigas: "Ladies, remember, don't get mad, get ev-er-y-theeng." **A**

>> **Feeling Minnesota** Keanu Reeves and Cameron Diaz star in...an uproarious road comedy? A grim romance in which they're threatened by an interloper? A quirky drama about complex family dynamics? Or (we suspect) a hodgepodge of all of the above? **C**

>> **The Ghost and the Darkness** Are Val Kilmer and Michael Douglas fighting the African natives, the British imperialists, the railroad, some supernatural wildlife, or each other? You hope the movie itself isn't as disjointed—but is as terrifying as the obtuse trailer suggests. **B**

>> **Ransom** Touchstone's sneak peek starts slowly, with the domestic bliss of Rene Russo and Mel Gibson being shattered with a phone call from their son's kidnappers, then zips into a montage of Gibson running in traffic, rolling across the hood of a cab, and getting slapped by Russo. Just as your head begins to spin, director Ron Howard's reassuring name appears on screen. This we've got to see. **A**

>> **Sleepers** A half-baked trailer, since no one who hasn't read the book can figure out what the movie's about. Apparently Kevin Bacon did something really bad to a bunch of boys who get mad, grow up, and get even. (Somehow Robert De Niro figures in as a priest.) Still, the trailer's an effective tease: lots of revenge ("It's payback time," says Brad Pitt) and hunk bonding. **B**



based on the guy, mirroring him," says Douglas, who pairs up with beatnik Stoltz, music critic Davison, and beach genius Dillon. The rich mélange of period musical styles attracted a powerful supporter off camera: executive producer Martin Scorsese. "Marty really loves that Brill Building period," says Anders, "and in fact had wanted to do the story of [rock songwriters] Leiber and Stoller but hadn't been able to because of rights." (Sept. 13) <<BUZZ>> Even if the film doesn't fly, the soundtrack should offer a remarkable, uh, tapestry of '60s flavors.

MAXIMUM RISK

STARRING JEAN-CLAUDE VAN DAMME, NATASHA HENSTRIDGE DIRECTED BY RINGO LAM

LET'S SEE: Jean-Claude Van Damme is playing identical twin brothers. Haven't we seen this someplace before? Oh, the *big* difference between *Maximum Risk* and Van Damme's previous *Double Impact*, in which he also played identical twins, is that this time one of the twins—the villainous one—is dead. Got that? Another difference: This time, *Species*' gorgeous Henstridge is on hand, playing a hostess in a Russian nightclub who helps Van Damme

find out what happened to his bad brother. "Actually, I'm a little confused at the moment," she says. "We just did reshoots, so I'm not sure exactly how my character is going to come out. I think I'm more along just for the ride." (Sept. 13) <<BUZZ>> Evil twins? Bad Russian accents? Unless you're a rabid Van Damme fan, save eight bucks and catch a couple of daytime soap operas instead.

NIGHT FALLS ON MANHATTAN

STARRING ANDY GARCIA, RICHARD DREYFUSS, LENA OLIN, RON LEIBMAN DIRECTED BY SIDNEY LUMET

LAST YEAR, eyebrows shot up when Dreyfuss appeared at the O.J. Simpson trial for research; now it turns out he was interested only in the lawyers. *Night Falls* has nothing to do with the Media Event of the Century. Instead, Lumet's adaptation of former New York City deputy police commissioner Robert Daley's 1993 novel, *Tainted Evidence*, follows a Manhattan DA (Garcia) who uncovers police corruption that implicates his father; Dreyfuss is the liberal, William Kunstler-like defense attorney who defends Dad. The director, whose courtroom-drama

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credentials date back to *Twelve Angry Men* (1957), says he trimmed the novel's romantic subplot and upped the psychological intrigue. "The moral conflict is very, very tough," he says. "It's brutal!" So brutal, in fact, that Garcia admits he had to fight an impulse to overact: "A lot of times, [Lumet] said, 'We need less emotion in this scene.'" **<<BUZZ>>** Grisham has made the courtroom genre hot, but Lumet's last attempt (*Guilty as Sin*) was judged Not Great.

RICH MAN'S WIFE

STARRING HALLE BERRY, CHRIS McDONALD, CLIVE OWEN **DIRECTED BY** AMY HOLDEN JONES

WHEN HER OWN husband left her alone on Martha's Vineyard, Holden Jones (who wrote *Indecent Proposal*) got the idea for this *Strangers on a Train*-esque thriller about an unhappy wife (Berry) who confides in a sympathetic-cum-psychotic stranger and then finds herself a suspect in her husband's murder. "My car broke down on the road at night," she says. "I was so angry to have been left in that situation. I didn't wish [my husband] was dead, but I started thinking what would happen if a stranger came along...." McDonald, who replaced Daniel Baldwin, wore a fat suit to play the unlovable husband. But Berry says the film's focus stays on the

"strong and vulnerable" female lead. "I think women will feel good about this character," she says. "There's a twist in it that I think could be every woman's fantasy." (Sept. 13) **<<BUZZ>>** Men will stay away, so ads will have to convince women it's more than a glossy TV movie.

SECRETS AND LIES

STARRING TIMOTHY SPALL, BRENDA BLETHYN, MARIANNE JEAN-BAPTISTE **DIRECTED BY** MIKE LEIGH

THE VOGUE FOR dysfunctional-family angst may have waned Stateside, but it bloomed on the French Riviera this spring when the Cannes judges awarded the Palme d'Or to Brit filmmaker Leigh's comic tearjerker about an adopted black woman (Baptiste) seeking her white birth mother (Best Actress winner Blethyn, best known here as Brad Pitt's mom in *A River Runs Through It*). As the addled, unsuspecting matriarch, Blethyn weeps as copiously as any leading lady in history, especially when she first meets her long-lost child. "Me? You should have seen the camerawoman," laughs Blethyn. "A focus puller, I think. A tough lady. She was in buckets of tears." Says Leigh, known for shaping his scripts through extensive freewheeling rehearsals: "There's no improvisation on screen. You're looking at thor-

What if Hollywood canceled this year's fall movie season and Academy Awards voters had to come up with five Best Picture nominees anyway? Here's what the list might look like: *Courage Under Fire*, *Emma*, *Fargo*, *Lone Star*, and *Trainspotting*. If that selection sounds far-fetched, consider that by this time last year, four of the five eventual Best Picture nominees had already been released—*Apollo 13*, *Babe*, *Il Postino*, and the winner, *Braveheart*, which most Oscar nomination forecasters, including us, doubted would even make the final five. So take our expert opinion with a grain of salt when we say that this year the biggest Oscar contenders are probably still on the horizon. But that doesn't mean that all earlier movies will be ignored: *Fargo*'s Frances McDormand and *Emma*'s Gwyneth Paltrow could vie for Best Actress, *Courage*'s Denzel Washington could nail a Best Actor nomination, and *Lone Star* writer-director John Sayles surely merits attention as well. (Don't count out *A Time to Kill* either, as a safely traditional choice in an oddball year.) All these potential nominees can take comfort in a September lineup that shouldn't hurt their chances much. Among this month's releases, the only competition is minor—the Merchant Ivory biopic *Surviving Picasso* and the long-delayed *American Buffalo*.



(Clockwise) *Trainspotting*'s Ewan McGregor; Washington; Paltrow; *Lone Star*'s Kris Kristofferson; McDormand

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oughly rehearsed, tightly scripted material that comes out of improvisation." (Sept. 28) <<BUZZ>> A likely art-house hit; its high-profile slot opening the New York Film Festival will help.

LAST MAN STANDING

STARRING BRUCE WILLIS, BRUCE DERN, CHRISTOPHER WALKEN, WILLIAM SANDERSON, DAVID PATRICK KELLY, NED EISENBERG, KARINA LOMBARD, ALEXANDRA POWERS DIRECTED BY WALTER HILL

WHEN IS a remake not a remake? The 1964 Clint Eastwood Western *A Fistful of Dollars* is generally regarded as a gloss on Akira Kurosawa's 1961 samurai epic *Yojimbo*. But although *Standing* began when producer Arthur Sarkissian optioned remake rights to *Yojimbo*, director Hill insists, "I'm not remaking Kurosawa's movie—that would be a foolish endeavor. It's a rather free adaptation." New Line first wanted to turn the tale of a freelance warrior into a sci-fi flick; instead, Hill set it in a 1930s Texas town, where a Man With No Name (Willis) plays two warring mobsters against each other. Sounds like *Yojimbo* to us—and to Willis, who reportedly got \$16.5 million for the role. "This movie is more like *Yojimbo* than *Dollars* was," says the actor. "You could draw a straight line from Greek tragedy to *Yojimbo* to this film." (Sept. 20) <<BUZZ>> *Die Hard 4* it ain't. But in a very uncompetitive month, it could be the last action movie standing.



DOUBLE SHOT

>> Willis aims high and keeps barreling along in *Last Man*, the latest Western revision of *Yojimbo*

ALSO IN Sept

BIG NIGHT

Campbell Scott (*Dying Young*) and Stanley Tucci (*Murder One*) turn a family-run Italian restaurant in '50s New Jersey into a delicious metaphor for the battle between art and commerce. Winner of Sundance's best-screenplay award, it's the ultimate movie-and-dinner date, although the cast itself (which also includes Minnie Driver and Isabella Rossellini) got heartily sick of all that prop food: "Eventually," admits Scott, "it got pretty funky." (Sept. 20)

CAUGHT

Edward James Olmos (*American Me*) and director Robert M. Young reunite for a noir thriller about a couple (Olmos and Maria Conchita Alonso) who take in a mysterious drifter who arrives at their New Jersey fish market. The low-cost film was shot speedily and—a greater rarity—in sequence. "The production was so lean that we could move very quickly," says Olmos. "We were maybe in one truck." (Sept. 25)

FEELING MINNESOTA

Somewhere between action movies and rock

gligs, Keanu Reeves managed to squeeze in a darkly comic little indie about two brothers with the hots for the same woman (Cameron Diaz). Says first-time director-writer Steven Baigelman, "I think he decided to do this movie for the same reason he turned down *Speed 2*" Which was why, exactly? (Sept. 13)

FLY AWAY HOME

First came a 20/20 story about a Canadian artist who parented a group of geese. Then came Hollywood, which made it a father-daughter story with Jeff Daniels and Anna Paquin. "I saw the 20/20 piece and said, 'Oh, my God, if we can get remotely close to it...'" says Daniels, who gives the film a thumbs-up: "It grabs you." (Sept. 13)

MOUTH TO MOUTH

Moviegoers had a bad connection with Spike Lee's *Girl 6*, but Miramax hopes its Spanish-language comedy about a struggling actor working at a phone-sex line will get audiences hot and bothered. "In Spain everybody loved it," says Altana Sánchez-Gijón (*A Walk in the Clouds*), who plays a seductress. "We'll see. Maybe people here will laugh in different places." (Sept. 6)

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GOOSING THE AUDIENCE

>> Fly's Paquin (above) flocks with her feathered friends; meanwhile, Charlize Theron busts a seductive move in *Valley*

JOSEPH CONRAD'S
THE SECRET AGENT

This still-timely Victorian-era terrorist drama is based on the novel said to be among the alleged Unabomber's favorite books. But director Christopher Hampton (*Carrington*) actually wrote the script in 1992. Featuring Bob Hoskins as an agent provocateur, Patricia Arquette as his wife, and an uncredited Robin Williams, the \$7 million production (shot in 7 weeks) taught Hampton the most crucial rule of directing: "Get on with it."

2 DAYS IN
THE VALLEY

Writer-director John Herzfeld patched together an eclectic ensemble (Danny Aiello, Jeff Daniels, Marsha Mason, Teri Hatcher, Glenna Headly,

James Spader, Eric Stoltz) for his tale of 10 mostly depressed denizens of the San Fernando Valley who become linked after the murder of a philandering husband. Says Herzfeld, "It's a twisted comedy that starts out dark and slowly brightens." (Sept. 27)

PLUS

The Leopard Son tracks the growth of a baby feline, with narration by Sir John Gielgud and music by Stewart Copeland of the Police. A brutal update of "Little Red Riding Hood," **Freeway** stars Reese Witherspoon (*Fear*) as a Grandma-bound youngster accosted by an abusive child psychologist (Kiefer Sutherland). Rosie Perez plays a taxi dancer in a dead-end relation-

ship with has-been TV actor Harvey Keitel in **Somebody to Love**. Director Michael Corrente takes on David Mamet's **American Buffalo**, with Dustin Hoffman and Dennis Franz as poker buddies whose friendship goes out the window as they both attempt to find a stolen buffalo-head nickel. A hustler, a gardener, and a former baseball player compete for a married bartender (Lara Flynn Boyle) in **The Big Squeeze**. A strait-laced foster mother (Whoopi Goldberg) takes in a young orphan—and his imaginary friend—in **Bogus**. **Sweet Nothing**, which has already had a brief theatrical run in New York, follows a couple (Mira Sorvino and I Shot Andy Warhol's

Michael Imperioli) torn apart by drug addiction. In **Brother of Sleep**, an Austrian villager's love of music distracts him from the affections of his best friend's sister. An L.A. male prostitute, played by ex-Madonna boy toy Tony Ward, is pursued by a journalist in **Hustler White**. A woman's fascination with death leads her to take a job cleaning up after murders in **Curdled**, costarring William Baldwin and Angela Jones. And following **A Perfect Candidate**, yet another documentary covers Oliver North's senatorial campaign: **Ollie's Army** chronicles the James Madison University College Republicans' failed attempts to elect their notorious hero.

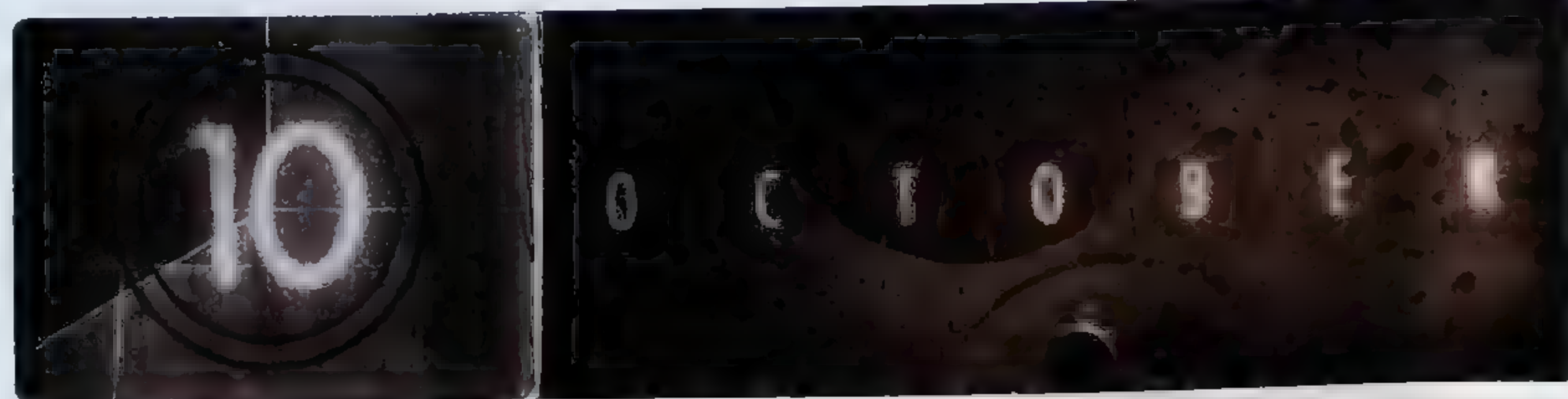
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That Thing You Do!

DIRECTED BY

TOM
HANKS

LAST YEAR, EVERYONE in Hollywood accepted one maxim: Tom Hanks can do anything. *Forrest Gump* landed the actor his second Oscar, while *Apollo 13* and *Toy Story*, respectively, became his fifth and sixth hits in a row. Hanks might've been tempted to safeguard such a sterling record with a sure thing, but instead he opted for *That Thing*—a low-key ensemble flick about a ramshackle Pennsylvania rock



STARRING TOM HANKS, TOM EVERETT SCOTT,
LIV TYLER, JOHNATHON SCHAECH, STEVE ZAHN, KEVIN POLLAK,
RITA WILSON, PETER SCOLARI

ROCKIN' ROLES

>> From left, Hanks hangs with Schaech, Tyler, Ethan Embry, Scott, and Zahn

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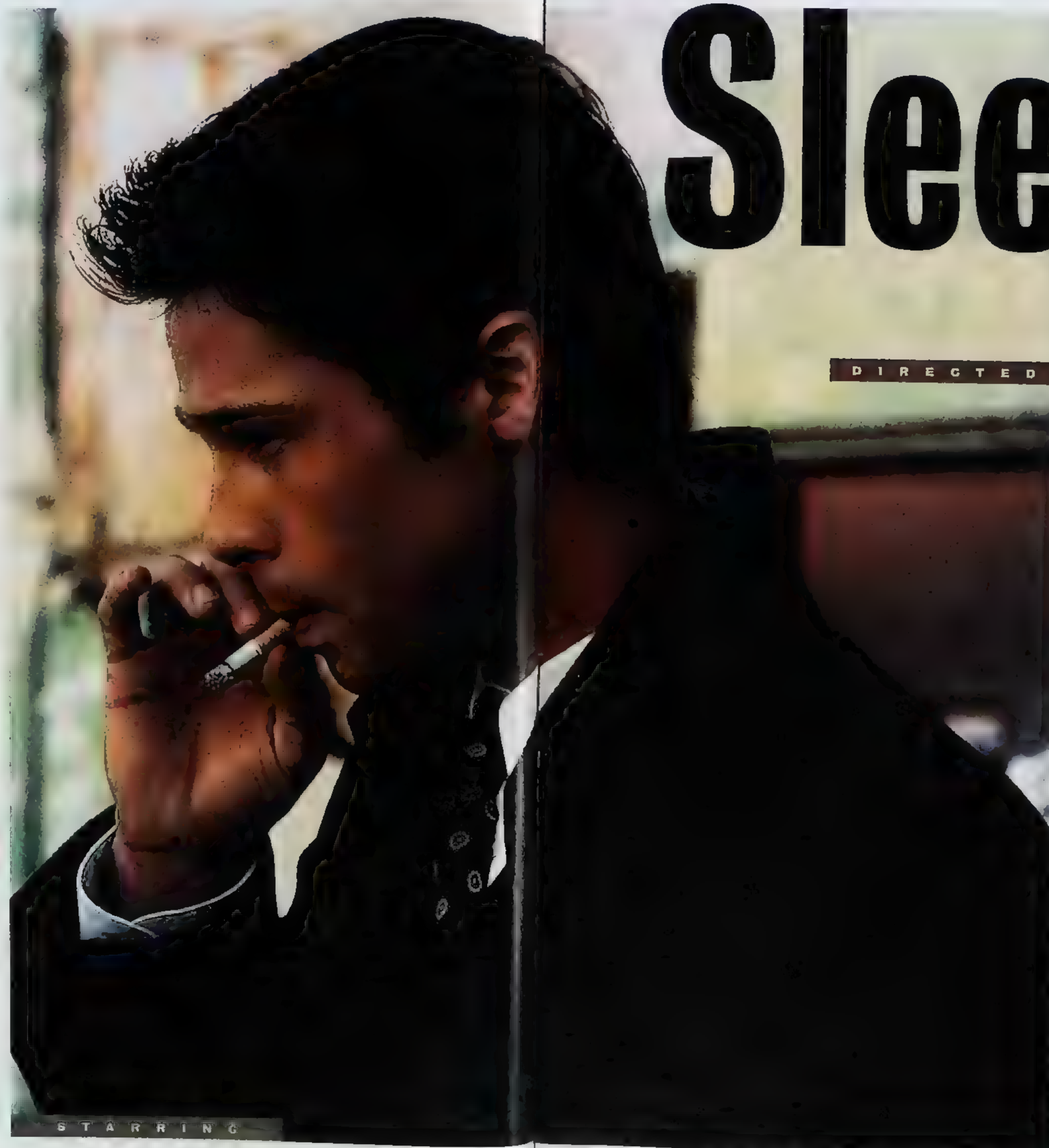
band making its way to Los Angeles in 1964. He wrote the script; he wanted to direct it. Sure, Hollywood thought, Hanks can do anything. But can he do everything?

Thankfully, the actor's modesty tends to deflect any accusations of hubris. "I think it would've been *real* hubris if I had written a story about a guy who lives in a cave all by himself, and I starred in it," says Hanks, who plays only a small role, popping up as a Phil Spector-esque record producer. "But this movie is a big kind of sloppy ensemble piece, and because of that I think I can avoid any sort of *auteur* distractions."

Although Hanks has feasted on stardom, *That Thing You Do!* focuses on people who get to experience only a nibble: Its narrator is Guy Patterson (Scott), a small-town drummer who watches his band, the Wonders, rise from obscurity, score a radio smash, and fall apart at the very crest of fame. To stress the point (and save money), Hanks bypassed big names and filled the screen with young actors on the brink of celebrity: *Stealing Beauty*'s Tyler, *How to Make an American Quilt*'s Schaeck, *Reality Bites*' Zahn, and Scott, a newcomer best known from TV's *Grace Under Fire*. "I don't think our story could've survived having a big recognizable star as one of the ensemble," Hanks says.

Of course, the actors hadn't been born in 1964, so their writer/director plied them with vintage videotapes like *Beach Blanket Bingo* and *The T.A.M.I. Show* to acquaint them with the pre-grunge vibe. And since they weren't musicians, the Wonders took lessons and practiced together in order to groove like a real band.

Apparently it worked. "We played for a big huge crowd inside this one room, and it was just a big rush," reports Scott, whose performance already has some calling him—surprise—a young Tom Hanks. "Of course they were being paid to scream, but we were pretty psyched." (Oct. 4) << BUZZ >> Although its giddy charms probably aren't Oscar material, *That Thing*'s got a good beat and you can dance to it.



STARRING

JASON PATRIC, BRAD PITT, ROBERT DE NIRO, DUSTIN HOFFMAN, KEVIN BACON, BILLY CRUDUP, RON ELDARD, VITTORIO GASSMAN, MINNIE DRIVER, TERRY KINNEY, BRAD RENFRO, JOSEPH PERRINO

Sleepers

DIRECTED BY

BARRY LEVINSON

THIS IS A TRUE story about friendship that runs deeper than blood," Lorenzo Carcaterra writes at the start of *Sleepers*, an account of four boys from New York's Hell's Kitchen who are sent to reform school, where they are tortured and sexually assaulted. Two of them grow up to kill a former reformatory guard; the two others—an assistant DA and a journalist—conspire to help them beat the rap. >> Sounds almost too incredible to be true, doesn't it? Well, no sooner had Propaganda Films grabbed the movie rights than critics began complaining there was no way to verify the book's heavily disguised events; the Manhattan DA's office insisted no such case ever took place; and New York's Division for Youth denied such a brutal reformatory ever existed. >> By then, Levinson (*Disclosure*) was already writing a screenplay. "I was baffled," he says of the controversy. "Any one of the major elements could have happened. What is the need to know its exact authenticity? This is not about what Kennedy did or didn't do or whether Nixon had a conversation. I do know there was one moment while I was filming a courtroom scene. One of the guards was testifying about what had happened in the school. Lorenzo happened to be on the set and I saw him turn away as if he couldn't quite watch." >> Certainly, Levinson had no difficulty convincing a stellar cast to join him: He first signed De Niro—who plays a street-wise priest who bridges the movie's two halves, be-friending the characters as boys and standing up for them as men—and the others quickly followed: Pitt as the DA, Patric as the journalist, and Hoffman as a drug-addicted defense attorney. "There are members of the cast I never even met," laughs Bacon, who plays a brutal guard. "A whole movie I had nothing to do with. I worked with this great bunch of 13- and 14-year-old boys," among them *The Client*'s Renfro as the boyhood Pitt. >> Admitting in the book that he'd changed the characters' identities, Carcaterra also confessed he'd "made many of them a lot better looking than they really are." But given the film's first five words—"This is a true story"—he may still have more explaining to do. (Oct. 18) << BUZZ >> Impatient moviegoers should be warned: Some of the sexiest men alive don't make their entrance until halfway through the 2½-hour movie.

FREEDOM FIGHTER

Pitt's prosecutor is drawn into a plot to clear an old friend



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FALL MOVIE PREVIEW

THE LONG KISS GOODNIGHT

STARRING GEENA DAVIS, SAMUEL L. JACKSON, YVONNE ZIMA, CRAIG BIERKO DIRECTED BY RENNY HARLIN

THEY'RE BAAAAACK. The husband-and-wife team that brought the world *Cutthroat Island*—the costliest flop in Hollywood history—are braving another action flick. This time, Harlin directs Davis in a noirish thriller about an ordinary housewife with amnesia who discovers that she's actually a highly trained secret agent (hey, it could happen). "It's an action film, but between all the action stuff there's a real human drama," says Jackson, playing a private detective who helps Davis uncover her past. "Her character is trying to figure out who she is, and my character is trying to find his place in the world. It's really about a journey of self-discovery." But with a budget considerably less than *Cutthroat's* reported \$100 million, that journey had to be taken in coach. "The original script had everything but the kitchen sink in it," explains action scribe Shane Black (*Lethal Weapon*), who got an eye-popping \$4 million for his troubles. "So we took out the least economical stuff. But this isn't about grand spectacle anyway." (Oct. 11) <<BUZZ>> No pirates. No sea chanteys. No Matthew Modine. Sounds okay to us.

TO GILLIAN ON HER 37TH BIRTHDAY

STARRING PETER GALLAGHER, MICHELLE PFEIFFER, CLAIRE DANES, KATHY BAKER, WENDY CREWSON, BRUCE ALTMAN, FREDDIE PRINZE JR. DIRECTED BY MICHAEL PRESSMAN

WITHOUT THE SACCHARINE sobs of Demi Moore and the sex-at-the-pottery-wheel filler, *To Gillian...* could be a sugar-and-schmaltz-free *Ghost* that's good for you. When TriStar executives saw Michael Brady's 1986 play about a husband (Gallagher) in such deep mourning for his late wife (Pfeiffer) that he'd rather talk to her ghost than to their teenage daughter (Danes), they bought the movie rights but ultimately put it in turnaround. It was resuscitated two years

ago, with *Picket Fences* creator David E. Kelley writing the script for *Fences* director Pressman. (And that's *Fences* star Baker playing Pfeiffer's sister.) Since the action takes place during one Nantucket weekend, there was nothing to push the budget beyond \$10 million—not even Kelley's wife, Pfeiffer, who was paid slightly more than scale. Jokes Gallagher, "I don't know what her life at home would have been like if she didn't do it." (Oct. 24) <<BUZZ>> Critics will consider it a day at the beach, but the crowds might find the waters too calm.

JUDE

STARRING CHRISTOPHER ECCLESTON, KATE WINSLET DIRECTED BY MICHAEL WINTERBOTTOM

WILL THOMAS HARDY dethrone Jane Austen as Hollywood's next Brit-lit flavor of the month? Christopher Eccleston (*Shallow Grave*) thinks so. "I read a lot of Thomas Hardy novels when I was 17," says the actor, "and he's far more realistic and dark than Austen." Eccleston, who says he's usually "cast as child molesters and aggressive repressed types," plays the title character, a lonely romantic who leaves his poor surroundings in hopes of becoming a Latin scholar at an Oxford-esque university, then falls for his beautiful cousin, played by *Sense and Sensibility* Oscar nominee Kate Winslet. Based on Hardy's doomed 1896 romance *Jude the Obscure* and jointly bankrolled by PolyGram and the BBC, Michael Winterbottom's \$7 million production emphasizes the story's sex, violence, and emotional brutality. "This isn't a Merchant Ivory film. Those look so great," says producer Andrew Eaton, "but there are other ways to do period films." (Oct. 18) <<BUZZ>> A Cannes hit, but tough going; leave your grandmother at home.

LESS-THAN-TOTAL RECALL

Jackson's private eye helps Davis' amnesiac housewife discover her undercover identity



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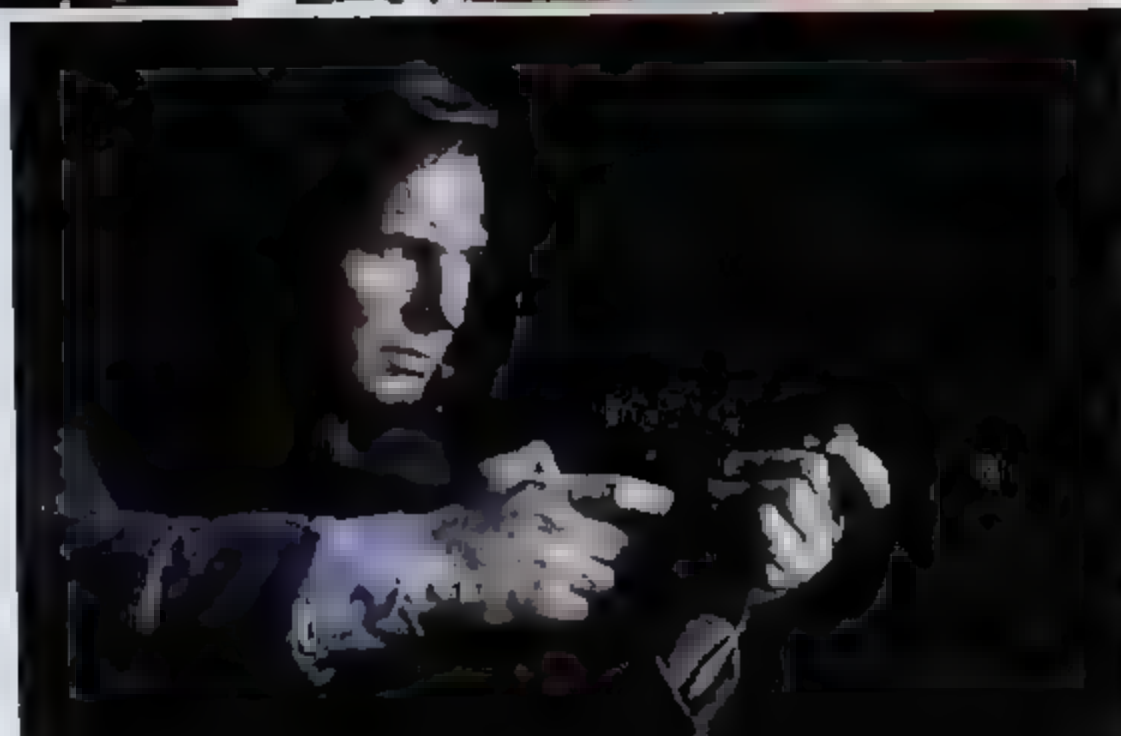


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► DiCaprio and Danes as the tragically hip *Romeo and Juliet*; *Michael Collins*' Neeson leads a band of fighting Irish

STARRING LIAM NEESON, AIDAN QUINN,
ALAN RICKMAN, JULIA ROBERTS, STEPHEN REA
DIRECTED BY NEIL JORDAN

With a mere \$28 million budget, Jordan got help from the stars, who took salary cuts, and from the Irish government, which "basically allowed us to close the whole city of Dublin down" to shoot crowd scenes. Only the weather failed to cooperate. "It was the

HOPE SPRINGS eternal, especially when it comes to resurrecting love stories—Romeo and Juliet's, specifically. Not content with Zeffirelli's seminal 1968 take, the Australian Luhrmann (*Strictly Ballroom*) has created a rockin', rollin', Dolce & Gabbana-clad vision of the lovers, set in a south Florida the Bard never imagined. Danes and DiCaprio recite Shakespeare, but in this incarnation, they're not only heartsick but hip, and their world includes satellite dishes and elevators. "It wasn't Romeo and Juliet running around in tights with an affected English accent," says DiCaprio, who admits that when he first heard of the plans to modernize *R&J*, "I regarded it as camp, a little fishy." Gradually, the passion of the story won the actor, who was rattled only by the need to weep on cue throughout filming in Mexico. "I've gotten better at it, which is cool," he says. "Before, it took me like forever. Now I just need like 10 minutes to sit down and really think of something terrible." Danes had the opposite problem: "I remember in the death scene, he was crying his eyes out," she says. "I got so emotional and I thought, 'Oh, no, I can't have tears coming. I'm supposed to be comatose.'" (Oct. 18)

<<BUZZ>> If a loud soundtrack, gaudy graphics, and two spectacular stars can't rouse teens from a Shakespeare-induced snooze, nothing can.

EVER WONDER what Whoopi Goldberg would look like as a guy? Well, wonder no more. After inventing a business partner to get ahead in the male-dominated world of Wall Street, Goldberg is forced to assume his identity. The result? "A cross between Marlon Brando and George Washington," says director Petrie (*Grumpy Old Men*), who explains that

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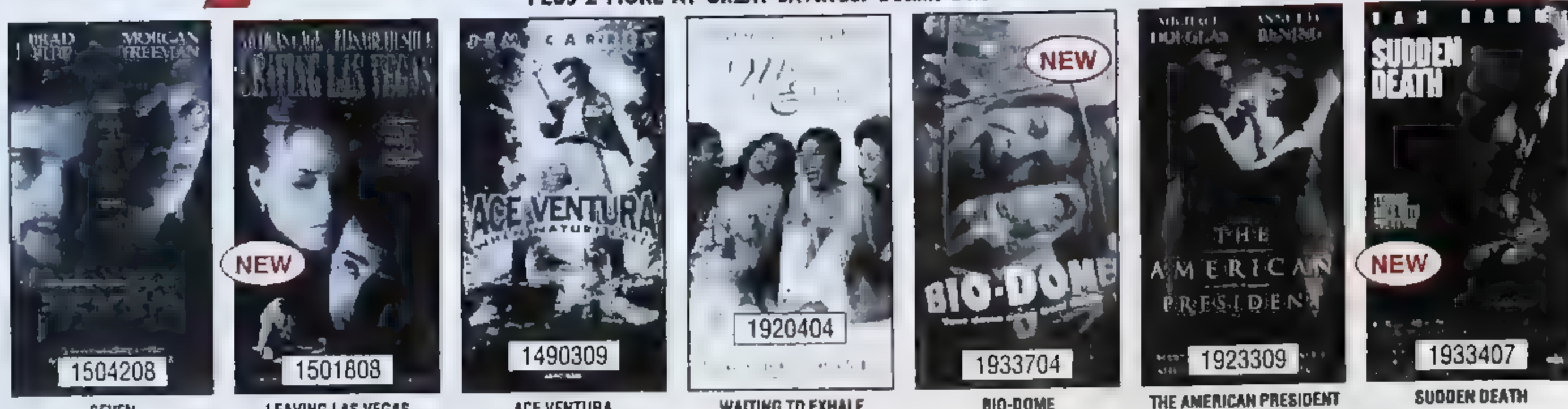
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SISTER ACT	1071208	SPEED	1297407	FRIED GREEN TOMATOES	1005404	INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE	0910604	STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK	0201608
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PRETTY WOMAN	0904102	ROB ROY	1423201	NOW AND THEN	1506407	DIE HARD 2: DIE HARDER	0941806	STAR TREK V: THE FINAL FRONTIER	0448805
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FALL MOVIE PREVIEW

as a man, his \$10 million star "had to have long hair and a ponytail to hide that Rasta thing."

Daly, who boarded countless red-eyes to juggle *The Associate's* New York shoot with his *Wings* schedule, didn't have time to research the Wall Street scene to play his deal-making villain. "What I did was observe some agents around Los Angeles," he says. "That's the best analogy." (Oct. 25) <<BUZZ>> Whoopi may be in peak form, but, says Petrie, "I worry about the title. Frankly, *The Associate* ain't funny."

GET ON THE BUS

STARRING RICHARD BELZER, ANDRE BRAUGHER, OSSIE DAVIS, CHARLES DUTTON DIRECTED BY SPIKE LEE

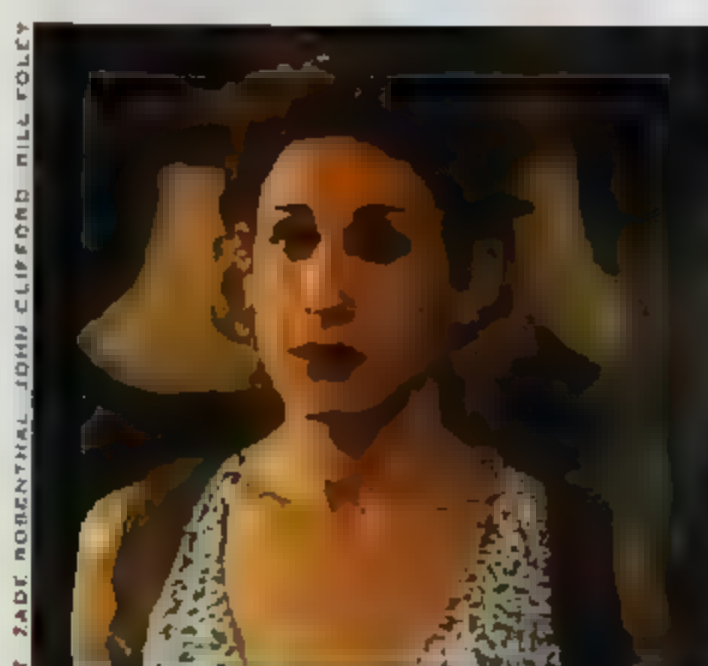
LEE'S FILM about 15 African-American men from South Central L.A. headed by bus to the Million Man March in Washington was shot in 21 days for just \$2.4 million—his lowest budget since *She's Gotta Have It*. But Lee is most proud of how he got the money—from a group of investors including Danny Glover, Wesley Snipes, Will Smith, and attorney Johnnie Cochran. "The most exciting part is that it's financed by African-Americans," says Lee.

"We hope it will serve as an example." Braugher, who attended last year's march, calls it "one of the best, most heartwarming events of my lifetime. I hope the movie conveys some of what I went through." (Oct. 16) <<BUZZ>> Less indulgent than *Girl 6*, Lee's first road movie should put him back in the good graces of critics, if not at the box office. (If only he'd put Keanu and Sandra on board...)

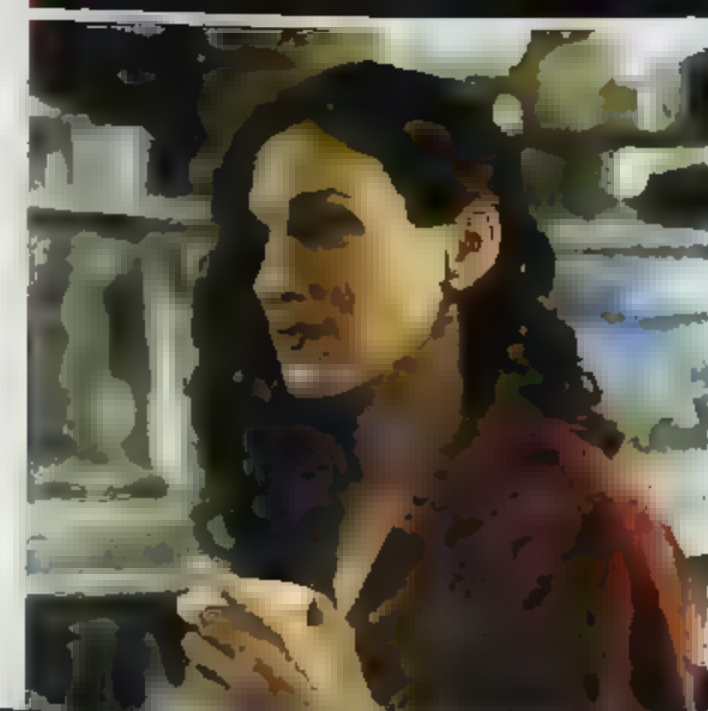
CAPITAL GANG
>> Director Lee hits the road with *Bus*



The Hardest-Working Woman in Show Business



GOING TO EXTREMES
>> Parker's many faces in *Mars* (right), *Measures* (below), *Fire*



If you ever had trouble distinguishing Sarah Jessica Parker from other actresses with three names, the challenge this fall will be telling Parker apart from herself. The busiest actress in Hollywood hurtles through four movies, all due out by year's end.

Parker starts off as a girl who can outbimbo Elizabeth Berkley in *The First Wives Club*. "You heat-seeking hairpin!" yells Bette Midler, after Parker takes her husband to bed and his credit card to Bergdorf's. She keeps on morphing in *Extreme Measures* as a nurse to Hugh Grant's doctor; in *Mars Attacks!* as an MTV-style reporter; and in *The Substance of Fire* as a publisher's daughter embroiled in a family power struggle.

That's not all. Parker squeezed in next year's comedy 'Til There Was You ("I couldn't believe how much work she was doing, and on top of everything, she'd be reading a Henry James novel" between takes, says director Scott Winant) and did a Broadway stint in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. Last spring, she spent several days shooting *Extreme Measures* in Toronto ("She told me I was the only one," jokes director Michael Apted), and shuttled back to Manhattan in time for the 8 o'clock curtain.

Parker returns to Broadway this December in a revival of *Once Upon a Mattress*. For now, she's vacationing in France—and undoubtedly catching up on her rest. —Degen Pener





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OCTOBER

THE GLIMMER MAN

STARRING STEVEN SEAGAL, KEENEN IVORY WAYANS, MICHELLE JOHNSON, BRIAN COX
DIRECTED BY JOHN GRAY

HOW IS THIS Steven Seagal movie different from all other Steven Seagal movies? "You know people are expecting to see him fight," admits director Gray, a *Hallmark Hall of Fame* veteran directing his first action flick. "But this doesn't have *Eraser*-type action. It's more a detective story, a complex one, and along the way he has to fight, now and again." Another difference: It's *intentionally* funny. On the trail of an L.A. serial killer, Seagal's detective becomes a suspect when his ex-wife turns up dead. Joining him as his reluctant cop buddy is Wayans, whose own humor, says Gray, "brings out a lighter side of Steven than we've seen before." As for the title, Seagal's character was once a CIA special operative prowling Third World countries. "All you'd see is jungle, then a glimmer," the movie's lore has it, "then you're dead." (Oct. 4) **<<BUZZ>>** Love 'em or hate 'em, Seagal movies consistently gross \$40 million or more.

THE CHAMBER

STARRING CHRIS O'DONNELL, GENE HACKMAN, LELA ROCHON, FAYE DUNAWAY
DIRECTED BY JAMES FOLEY

AS LONG AS John Grisham keeps creating heroic lawyers who battle long odds, Hollywood will continue to send cameras into his courtrooms.

This time, the earnest attorney is a recent law-school grad (O'Donnell) who discovers that his client (Hackman), a Klansman on death row for a race-related murder, is also his grandfather. *The Chamber* was purchased by Ron Howard and Brian Grazer's Imagine Entertainment for a record \$3.75 million when it was just an outline. By the time filming started, Howard had opted out of directing, Foley (*Fear*) had opted to rewrite William Goldman's script, and Grisham himself, who had resented suggestions from Universal executives about how to make his novel more cinematic, had opted to stay away. "We've had many rewrites, which I think are good, ultimately," says the sportsmanlike O'Donnell, who jokes that he "sent flowers and walked [Grazer's] dog for the part" (he was also one of many actors mentioned for *A Time to Kill*). And despite the author's cold shoulder, says Foley, "I could kiss John Grisham all over the place for having written the book." (Oct. 11) **<<BUZZ>>** It'll take all the drawing power of Grisham to sell yet another death-penalty drama to moviegoers.

NIGHTWATCH

STARRING EWAN MCGREGOR, NICK NOLTE, PATRICIA ARQUETTE, JOSH BROLIN
DIRECTED BY OLE BORNEDAL

IN HIS FIRST post-*Trainspotting* lead, hot Scot McGregor makes his American debut as a law student who takes a part-time job as a morgue night watchman and becomes suspect numero uno when a serial killer's clues point his way. If the plot sounds familiar, you're probably a serious foreign-film buff: Di-



TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

>> O'Donnell (with Rochon) defends his Klansman granddad in *The Chamber*; *Nightwatch*'s McGregor proves to be an unusual suspect.

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FALL MOVIE PREVIEW

rector Bornedal made the original just two years ago in Copenhagen, and Miramax liked it so much it signed him up for a remake. Bornedal's writer for the second telling was no less an English-as-a-first-language luminary than Steven (sex, lies and videotape) Soderbergh, whose script was strong enough to attract Nolte for a costarring role. Though it's a "roller-coaster suspense ride," Bornedal promises a European sensibility in the naturalistic acting, à la Roman Polanski—"not to compare myself with that guy. Well, perhaps I can today, because Roman Polanski doesn't make very good movies anymore." (Moved to Nov. 22) **<<BUZZ>> What's Danish for scary?**

MOTHER

STARRING ALBERT BROOKS, DEBBIE REYNOLDS, ROB MORROW, LISA KUDROW **DIRECTED BY** ALBERT BROOKS

DON'T THINK you can name me a realistic mother-son movie," says Brooks. "That's why I was able to get [rights to] the title *Mother*; it was still available." In his first directorial turn since *Defending Your Life*, Brooks plays a fortysomething veteran of two divorces who decides his problems with women must stem from Mom—and moves back in with the reluctant matron to determine what went wrong. Contrary to reports, Brooks says the title role never was Nancy Reagan's to decline, although they did meet. Instead, Reynolds, absent from features for 25 years, auditioned after repeated nagging from daughter Carrie Fisher. "Albert and I read one scene," Reynolds recalls, "and he said, 'You've got it.' I immediately became his mother and said: 'Well, Albert. Shouldn't you have me read two scenes?'" **<<BUZZ>> Kinder and gentler than Brooks' earlier work—but is that what his fans want?**

THE GHOST AND THE DARKNESS

STARRING VAL KILMER, MICHAEL DOUGLAS, JOHN KANI **DIRECTED BY** STEPHEN HOPKINS

TO HEAR HOPKINS tell it, this true tale—about a hunter (Douglas) and an engineer (Kilmer) on the trail of two lions who killed 130 people and almost derailed construction of Britain's East African Railway in 1896—was on everyone's must-make list. "There was always some superstar involved, like Kevin Costner, Ridley Scott, or Robert Redford," says the director, whose own six-year hunt for the story ended in 1994, when producers Douglas and Steven Reuther bought the William Goldman script. "We loved it," recalls Reuther. "But I also un-

derstood why it was a difficult movie." The big problems: filming the lions' rampage without hurting anyone, and mounting a production with a cast of thousands on a built-from-scratch South African set. The 73-day shoot finished on time despite record floods, electrical storms, and a crew felled by tick-bite fever. The known-to-be-difficult Kilmer worked 69 of those, after using his gift for mimicry to convince Hopkins (*Blown Away*) he didn't need a Brit for the role: "He'll call and be Brando and you won't know who he is," marvels the director. "Apparently he does me quite well, too, but he's been too chicken to do it for me." (Oct. 11) **<<BUZZ>> Reuther bets the gross will be double the film's \$55 million budget. Any takers?**

MA'S AND PAWS

>>> Reynolds returns to the big screen after a quarter century to play *Mother* to Brooks; hunters Douglas and Kilmer set their sights on two man-eating lions. In *The Ghost and the Darkness*



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OCTOBER

THINNER

STARRING ROBERT JOHN
BURKE, JOE MANTEGNA,
MICHAEL CONSTANTINE
DIRECTED BY TOM HOLLAND

ON THE CHUBBY heels of Eddie Murphy's *Nutty Professor*, fitness-obsessed Hollywood delivers the year's second weight-loss movie. Based on horror czar Stephen King's 1985 novel he wrote under the pseudonym Richard Bachman, *Thinner* follows an obnoxious 280-pound lawyer (Burke) who's been put under a curse by an irony-loving gypsy: No matter how much he eats, he loses three pounds every day. Director Holland says the movie's subtext is, well, pretty heavy: "You can see it as a metaphor for death and cancer and AIDS." And filming was no picnic either. Burke (who weighs about 175 pounds in real life) had to submit to four hours of makeup daily, slide into several fat suits, and go on a liquid diet to balance his on-screen pig-



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

>> Burke (left) and Mantegna put some weighty issues on the table in *Thinner*.

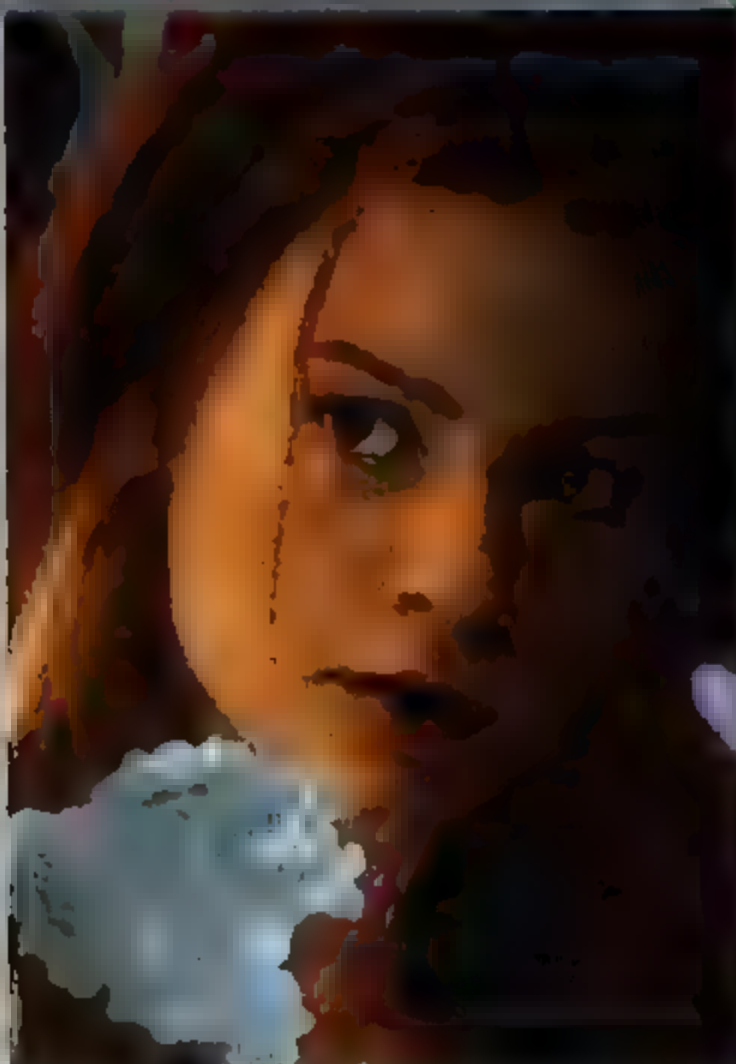
outs. On the movie's menu: vanloads of Chuckles, turkey, shrimp, french fries, and hamburgers. But, says Burke, "it was the cream pie that got me. That blew me up like a frog." (Oct. 25) <<BUZZ>> Should pass through theaters faster than Olestra.

What does a Palme d'Or from the Cannes film festival mean? Sometimes a lot; *Pulp Fiction* and *The Piano* are among the movies that have cruised straight from the Croisette to a Best Picture Oscar nomination. And sometimes nothing; 1995's big Cannes winner, Emir Kusturica's *Underground*, hasn't even gotten an American release yet. Which leaves the fate of this year's Palme d'Or recipient, Mike Leigh's *Secrets and Lies* (opening wider this month), as anybody's guess; the British import will probably need heavy critical support (and year-end critics' prizes for Leigh or star Brenda Blethyn) to compete with the big guns. October brings two of the biggest: Neil Jordan's Irish political history *Michael Collins* (which boasts previous nominees Liam Neeson, Stephen Rea, and Julia Roberts), and Barry Levinson's crime-and-friendship drama *Sleepers* (which boasts



REBEL, REBEL

>> Will Rickman, Danes be first-time nominees?



previous nominees Robert De Niro, Dustin Hoffman, and Brad Pitt). Impressive pedigrees, but there's just as much buzz for a number of performers who have never been nominated, from *Collins'* Alan Rickman to Claire Danes, who gets two chances in October with *To Gillian On Her 37th Birthday* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Those names may sound unlikely, but remember—of last year's 20 acting nominees, 15 were first-timers.



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FALL MOVIE PREVIEW

ALSO IN Oct

BAD MOON

A werewolf, \$1 million spent on special effects, and family values. That's what director Eric Red says gives this thriller its bite. The story: Our hero, Thor, realizes the brother (Michael Pare) of the woman he loves (Mariel Hemingway) is a werewolf. "It's about what happens when someone you trust becomes schizo," says Red. "You'll scream, but you'll also cry." Thor, by the way, is a German shepherd.

THE FUNERAL

Renegade director Abel Ferrara (*Bad Lieutenant*) populates his gritty Depression-era crime drama with tough guys like Christopher Walken (a last-minute replacement for Nicolas Cage) and Chris Penn. To Ferrara, however, the real thugs are those on the ratings board, which made him trim seven seconds of sexy footage to avoid an NC-17 rating. "A group of Beverly Hills housewives telling me what's suitable?" he grumbles. "You gotta really f---ing find that amusing." (Oct. 25)

LOOKING FOR RICHARD

"*Hamlet* or *Othello* would have been an easier choice," says creator-star-first-time director Al Pacino of his documentary-drama about Shakespeare's *Richard III*. His three-year labor of love remained unfinished until Ian McKellen's *Richard III* spurred Pacino to cut 80 hours of footage down to 2. Pacino financed the film himself, though he won't disclose the cost: "I lost count." (Oct. 11)

MICROCOSMOS

Bugs have love lives too, as this up-extremely-close-and-personal look at their social interactions, a Cannes sensation, makes clear. "We did not want to make a movie on the life of insects, but rather a 'natural fiction' with animal characters," says codirector Claude Nuridsany. "It's a fairy tale more than a documentary." (Oct. 11)

THE SHADOW CONSPIRACY

A presidential aide (Charlie Sheen) and a journalist

(Linda Hamilton) are pursued by a killer after they uncover a plot to kill the President (Sam Waterston). But don't expect Stallone-size battles from *Rambo* director George Cosmatos. "One thing that's refreshing is that Charlie doesn't run with a gun," he says. "He tries to save himself with his wits." Good luck. (Oct. 18)

WAITING FOR GUFFMAN

Having skewered the heavy-metal milieu as a member of Spinal Tap, director-actor Christopher Guest trains his satirical sights on another weird subset of showbiz with a mock-

umentary about a Missouri hamlet where locals are staging a musical pageant to honor the town's 150th birthday. The target, says costar Fred Willard: "small-town theatrical people who take themselves very seriously." (Oct. 25)

TREES LOUNGE

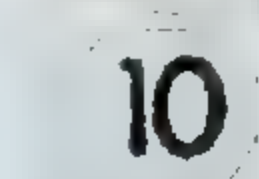
Considering he's worked with actor-auteur Quentin Tarantino, it's not surprising Steve Buscemi would decide to pursue directing himself. The former Mr. Pink also wrote *Trees Lounge* and stars as a Long Island barfly who loses his job and ends up driving an ice cream truck, a job Buscemi himself once had. "We shot in the same neighborhood I used to drive in," Buscemi says. "It was surreal." (Oct. 11)

TWELFTH NIGHT

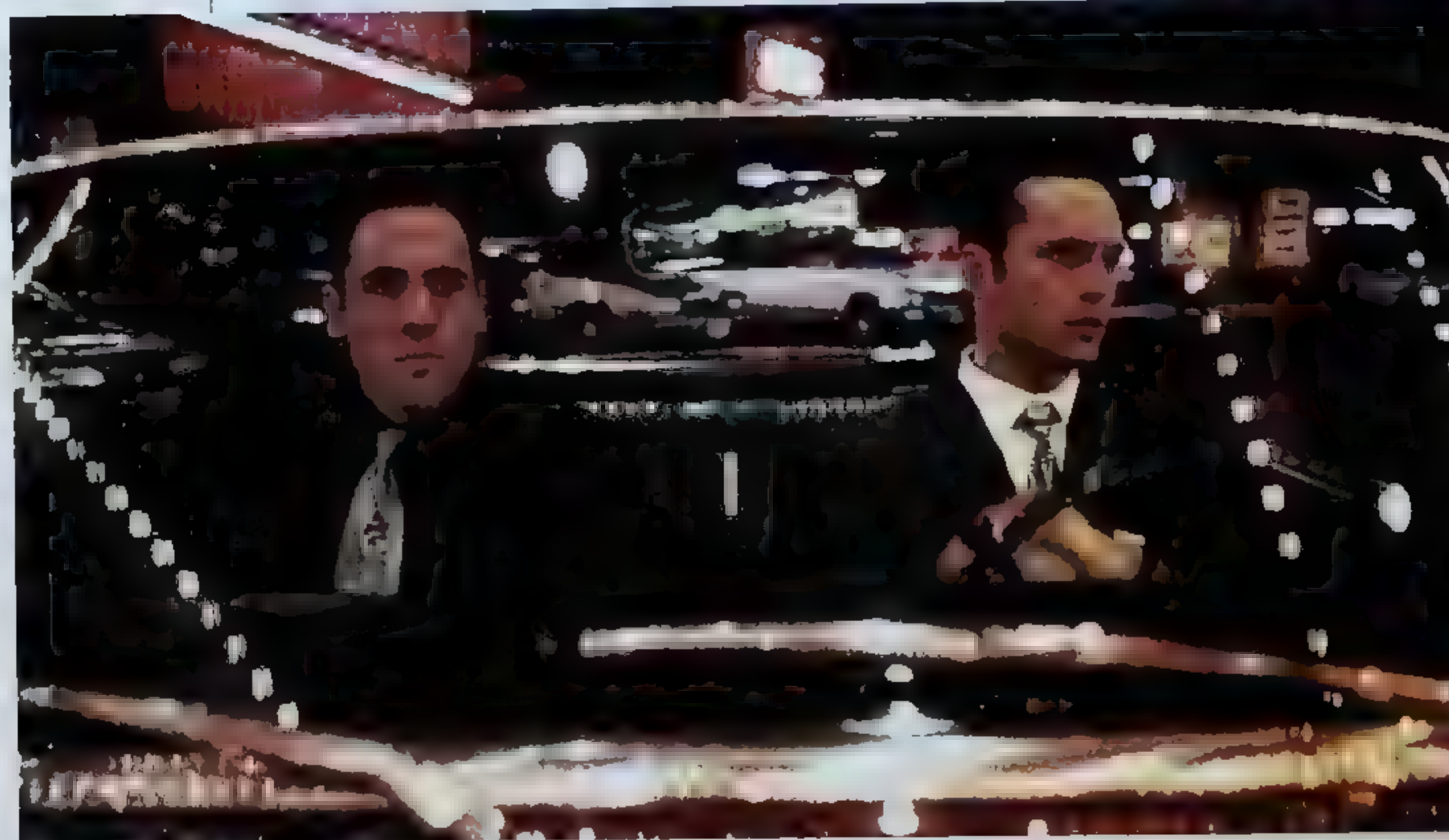
Three-time Tony winner Trevor Nunn set Shakespeare's gender-blending comedy at the turn of the century and shot it (for just \$5 million) during an icy Cornwall winter. The

NO HOLD'S BARD

>> Guest pulls out all the stops again in his local-theater spoof *Guffman*; Pacino and Spacey do Shakespeare in *Richard*



OCTOBER



CRUISE CONTROL

► Newcomers Jon Favreau (left) and Vince Vaughn scope out L.A. in the hipster comedy *Swingers*

etor. Walter Matthau is Judge Cool, a Southern eccentric who woos the dotty sister (Piper Laurie) of the richest woman in town (Sissy Spacek) in *The Grass Harp*. A British teen finds love with his boarding-school neighbor in *Beautiful*

Thing. Marcello Mastroianni plays a man whose multiple personalities result in *Three Lives & Only One Death*. Falling in love, an honor student and a dancer taste *Bitter Sugar* in gritty Havana. Two heroin addicts—one recovering, one still hooked—battle a vindictive mother-in-law in *Curtis's Charm*. A private-school teacher (Jon Lovitz) moves to the inner city and mentors a tough student (*Clockers'* Mekhi Phifer) in the comedy *High School High*. Two teens from rival Italian families meet during a production of *Romeo and Juliet* and find that *Love Is All There Is*. Matthew Broderick directs himself and Patricia Arquette in *Infinity*, about physicist Richard Feynman's struggle to rationalize his wife's battle with TB. And Emilio Estevez is back in *The Mighty Ducks 3*, as the Ducks invade a snooty prep school.

PLUS

A Mob mistress (Jennifer Tilly) and a thief (Gina Gershon) become *Bound* together after stealing \$2 million from Tilly's lover (Joe Pantolano). What will Ed's *Next Move* be when an insecure newcomer to New York falls for a struggling musician? Best Documentary Feature Oscar nominee *Small Wonders* (formerly *Fiddlefest*) profiles an East Harlem violin teacher who nurtures her students despite government budget cuts. Three friends take a crack at petty crime in *Palookaville*, featuring a cameo by *Fargo's* Frances McDormand. Lukas Haas and David Arquette are male hustlers, a.k.a. Johns, in this teenage *Midnight Cowboy* from 1996's Sundance festival. Jeanne Moreau plays a revered author who tries to return to her Parisian neighborhood after 30 years abroad in Ismail Merchant's *The Propri-*

cast (including Ben Kingsley and Richard E. Grant) fought the frost, but "sometimes our breath would be showing," says Helena Bonham Carter, "and nothing would come through in the acting but the fact that we were so cold." (Oct. 25)

SWINGERS

You heard it here first: "You're money" means "You're cool," and friends are now *babes*. And you can use it if the country catches on to the hip talk of this cocktail-culture comedy shot for "less than *Brothers McMullen*," according to director Doug Liman. Not that the dialect's base is that strong. "It's the vernacular of a group of friends," says Liman. "Everyone in L.A. isn't going 'You're money.'" Yet. (Oct. 18)

THE WAR AT HOME

"Last summer, Disney approached me about doing *Mighty Ducks 3*, and I said, 'Wow, that's

really not appealing,'" remembers Emilio Estevez. "But I said, 'I'll do it if you help me finance this film.'" The deal was made, and Estevez got to write, produce, and direct this small-scale drama about a Vietnam vet's return to Virginia. He also stars, alongside Kathy Bates, Kimberly Williams, and dad Martin Sheen. (Late October)

WHEN WE WERE KINGS

Legal battles and financial woes kept this documentary about the 1974 "Rumble in the Jungle" between Muhammad Ali and George Foreman in Zaire off screen for decades. It may have been worth the wait; critics gave *Kings* Sundance's Special Jury Prize. "There's no narration," says producer David Sonenberg. "All is so theatrical, we didn't want to turn it into a PBS special." (Oct. 25)



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OCTOBER

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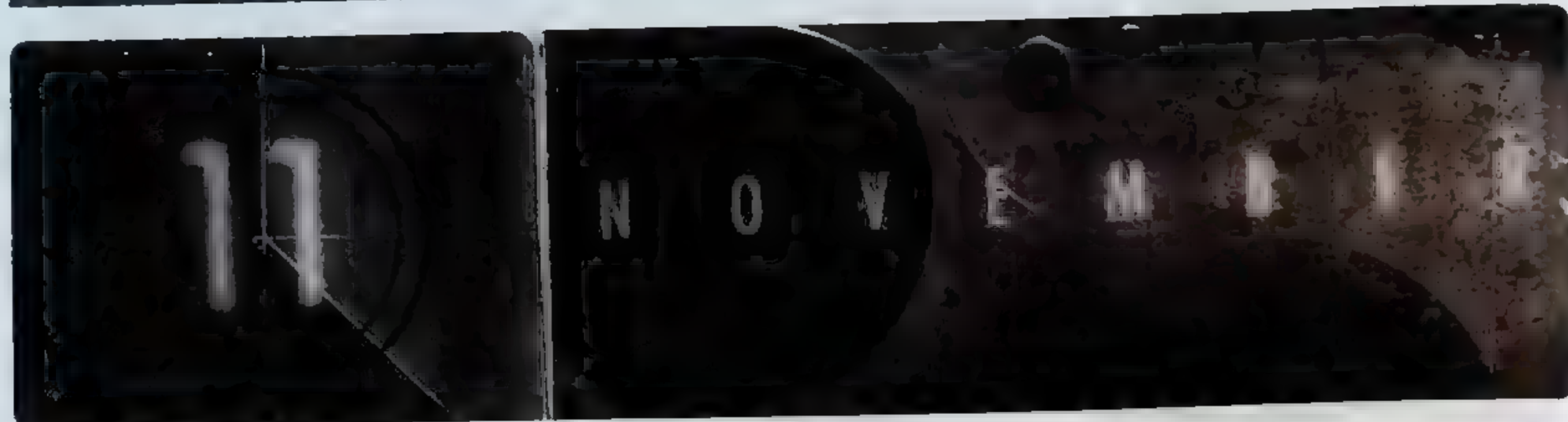
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The Crucible

WINONA RYDER
DANIEL DAY-LEWIS
JOAN ALLEN
PAUL SCOFIELD

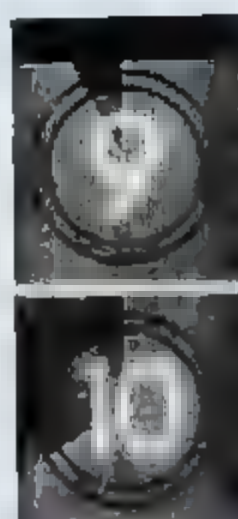
STARRING

MIDWAY THROUGH FILMING the first-ever English-language screen adaptation of Arthur Miller's 1953 masterpiece about the Salem witch-hunts, director Hytner, his cast, and crew took a field trip...to see Demi Moore's *The Scarlet Letter*. "The next day, we shot the hanging scene," remembers Ryder. "He was like, 'You don't want to look like those people in *The Scarlet Letter*, do you? Look *passionate!*'" >> Given the goal of making one of the most emotionally intense literary adaptations in years, Hytner's principals all took his instructions to heart. "You couldn't afford to relax between takes," says Ryder of the \$25 million film's draining 10-week shoot on the remote wildlife sanctuary of Hog Island, Mass. To get to the island, "we had a little fleet of pontoon

DIRECTED BY

NICHOLAS HYTNER

NEW APPEAL
Day-Lewis goes puritanical on ex-flame Ryder in *The Crucible*



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NOVEMBER

boats," says Hytner (*The Madness of King George*). "And nobody else was there except us." That Hytner was there at all meant he'd succeeded where many others hadn't: At different times, directors Norman Jewison, Kenneth Branagh, and Phil Joanou were attached to the tale of 17-year-old Abigail Williams (Ryder), whose affair with farmer John Proctor (Day-Lewis) leads her to plot against his wife (Allen, in a role first offered to Emma Thompson) and send Salem into hysteria with accusations of witchcraft.

A brief encounter between Hytner and a megaglam Ryder at the Academy Awards in 1995 convinced the 24-year-old actress that she had lost out on her chance to play teenage Abigail. "I had a martini in one hand and a cigarette in the other," Ryder says. "I looked like Joan Collins." Still, she managed to score a proper meeting with the director, for which she

showed up "wearing, like, pigtails and no makeup."

Once filming began, the frequent appearances of the film's screenwriter provided the cast with a cauldron's worth of humility. "There's nothing more intimidating," insists Bruce Davison (who plays Rev. Parris), "than playing a scene and seeing Arthur Miller in the gallery." With a nonchalance that shocked Hytner, Miller slashed dialogue in the interest of creating a smoother film. "Everybody was aware that we were trying to make a real movie based on one of the great masterpieces of 20th-century theater," says Hytner. "Only one person wasn't daunted by that, and that was Arthur." (Nov. 27)

<<BUZZ>> Recalling *Hog Island's* pleasant clime, Hytner says, "We kept saying that if there was an Oscar for weather, we'd win it." No worries, Nick—there may be plenty more of the real thing.

Ransom

MEL GIBSON, RENE RUSSO, GARY SINISE, DELROY LINDO, LILI TAYLOR

TO PAY OR NOT TO PAY is the moral quandary of Howard's first thriller, in which Gibson plays airline magnate Tom Mullen, a movie-star version of in-the-chips Donald Trump. With a glamorous blond wife (Russo) and an apartment with views of Central Park, he's the embodiment of a New Yorker's dream—until his 10-year-old son (played by Nick Nolte's son Brawley) is kidnapped, and he's plunged into every parent's nightmare. >> "I read the script a long time ago, and it wasn't great," says Gibson. "But the premise was fantastic, and the fact that he doesn't want to pay the ransom, that's intriguing.... He has a beautiful place, priceless artwork, and a successful marriage, and in one moment all of that is torn away. To me, it's interesting to see him freaking out in a corner biting a chair." >> But chair chewing is hard to sustain for two hours, even with enough running, dodging, and punching to satisfy action buffs. "You can't just walk around angst-ridden, because that's boring," says Gibson. His \$20 million paycheck lessened the pain of weeks of preproduction while

DIRECTED BY RON HOWARD



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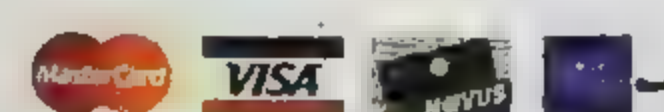
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FALL MOVIE PREVIEW

AN AFFAIR TO REMEMBER

Thomas and Fiennes play young
lovers in *The English Patient*

he worked on the script with Sinise (who plays a detective), Russo, Howard, and co-screenwriter Richard Price (*Clockers*). "I knew there was going to be a problem in terms of tone," says Russo. "Because it's like, 'Oh, my God, my son's been kidnapped, just give me some Valium and put me out.'" In the final script, Russo's role was fleshed out, the anatomy of the kidnapping became more detailed, and Gibson's character became "less of Captain America," Gibson says. "He's a guy, not a superguy. Everyone thinks he's being nuts. He is nuts. He's stressed-out to the max."

Filming wasn't totally relaxed either: Between New York's endless winter, the time Gibson took to pick up two *Braveheart* Oscars (including a win over Howard's *Apollo 13* for Best Picture), and a stop at the hospital to have his appendix removed, *Ransom*'s production fell so far behind that Disney bumped its release from the summer to the fall. Still, it wasn't the schedule that made Howard nervous. "The scariest part is wondering if you know what the hell you're doing," says the director, who's more accustomed to astronaut action than chase sequences. "Every day, you have any number of opportunities to totally screw up and destroy everything." (Nov. 8) <<BUZZ>> Fat chance. This smart thriller should bring home a king's ransom.

JINGLE ALL THE WAY

STARRING ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, PHIL
HARTMAN, SINBAD, RITA WILSON, JAMES BELUSHI,
ROBERT CONRAD DIRECTED BY BRIAN LEVANT

EVER THE BOOSTER, Schwarzenegger calls this \$75 million family flick "a very, very funny situational comedy." The situation wasn't so funny for Twentieth Century Fox last winter when development bogged down on its *Planet of the Apes* remake, long a pet Arnold project. But when Fox pitched him *Jingle*, he was taken with the idea of playing an "ordinary" (if muscle-bound) suburban dad who's desperate to buy his son the hot Christmas gift, Turbo Man, on Christmas Eve. And what makes kiddies so covet this do-gooder action toy? For one thing, says Arnold, he's got a turbojet (that's pronounced TYUH-bow-chet, of course). "He can fly very quickly to any location," Schwarzenegger explains. "He also has various different boomerang type of shooting devices that come out of the hand."

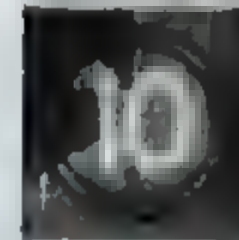


Not guns, but the kind of weapons that are funny to watch." Producer Chris Columbus courted Joe Pesci to play the pugnacious postal worker who battles Arnold for a doll, but Sinbad got the part instead. "Arnold versus Joe, physically, it's not a fair fight," says director Levant (*The Flintstones*, *Beethoven*). "Sinbad's 6 foot 5, 240 pounds. So it's more like, clear the ring, you know?" (Nov. 15) <<BUZZ>> Seems like a can't-miss de facto *Santa Clause* sequel. But Arnold in comedy is iffy—he bombed in *Junior* just two Novembers ago.

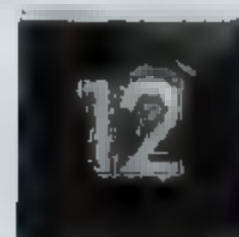
THE ENGLISH PATIENT

STARRING RALPH FIENNES, JULIETTE BINOCHÉ,
KRISTIN SCOTT THOMAS, WILLEM DAFOE
DIRECTED BY ANTHONY MINGHELLA

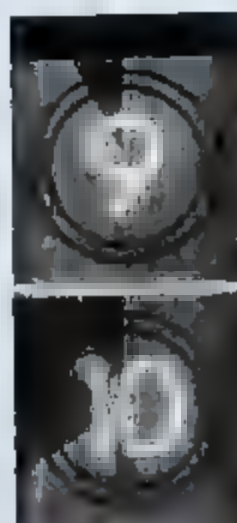
IF YOU THINK the story of a World War II pilot, bedridden in an Italian hospital, covered in bandages, and drifting through memories of an old romance sounds less than cinematic, Twentieth Century Fox agreed: During preproduction on the \$27 million adaptation of Michael Ondaatje's Booker Prize-winning novel, the studio yanked its financing. "Someone at Fox said, 'I want four [box office] stars,'" says producer Saul Zaentz. Miramax stepped in and the cast and crew agreed to take pay cuts. Fiennes and Binoche, who play patient and nurse, had teamed up before on a 1992 adaptation of *Wuthering Heights* that, says Fiennes, "didn't have a happy afterlife." (It was shelved for two years before ending up on television.) "It was nice to work together on something positive." While Binoche was always Minghella's first



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choice, Thomas (*Four Weddings and a Funeral*) was a harder sell as Fiennes' love interest. "I wrote letters, I auditioned, I pleaded, I begged," she says. "I had to fight like mad." (Nov. 8) <<BUZZ>> Should win raves except, possibly, from the novel's fans: "My first words to Michael," admits Zaentz, "were 'Don't worry, we'll f--- up your book.'"

THE MIRROR HAS TWO FACES

STARRING BARBRA STREISAND, JEFF BRIDGES, PIERCE BROSNAN, GEORGE SEGAL, MIMI ROGERS, LAUREN BACALL DIRECTED BY STREISAND

MASS FIRINGS? Ballooning budgets? Sniping on the set? Yup, La Babs is making another movie. This time, the excruciatingly selective singer-actress-director-producer is remaking a 1959 French romance about a homely professor who longs to beautify her life (Streisand was supposedly so obsessed about not looking too homely that wags on the set took to calling the film *The Mirror Has Two Chins*). Bridges plays her husband, Bacall is her mom, and Rogers is her pretty but bitchy sister. How tough was the shoot? At least 15 coworkers either were fired or



SMOKE AND IRE

Dillon's crook bellies up to Dunaway's bartender in *Albino Alligator*; Dorn puts his best face forward in the eighth big-screen *Trek* saga.



quit during the protracted production on Manhattan's Upper West Side, starting with Dudley Moore, who apparently couldn't get his lines right (he was replaced by Segal). Also MIA: cinematographer Dante Spinotti, editor Alan Heim, several members of Spinotti's crew, and an assortment of lighting technicians and production assistants. "Yeah, she's a perfectionist," says Rogers. "But I don't see that as a negative. She has incredible taste and a remarkable eye, so if she sees something that doesn't sit right, she needs to make it right." (Nov. 15) <<BUZZ>> Word is it's been testing even better than *Prince of Tides*, so maybe all the pain was worth it.

ALBINO ALLIGATOR

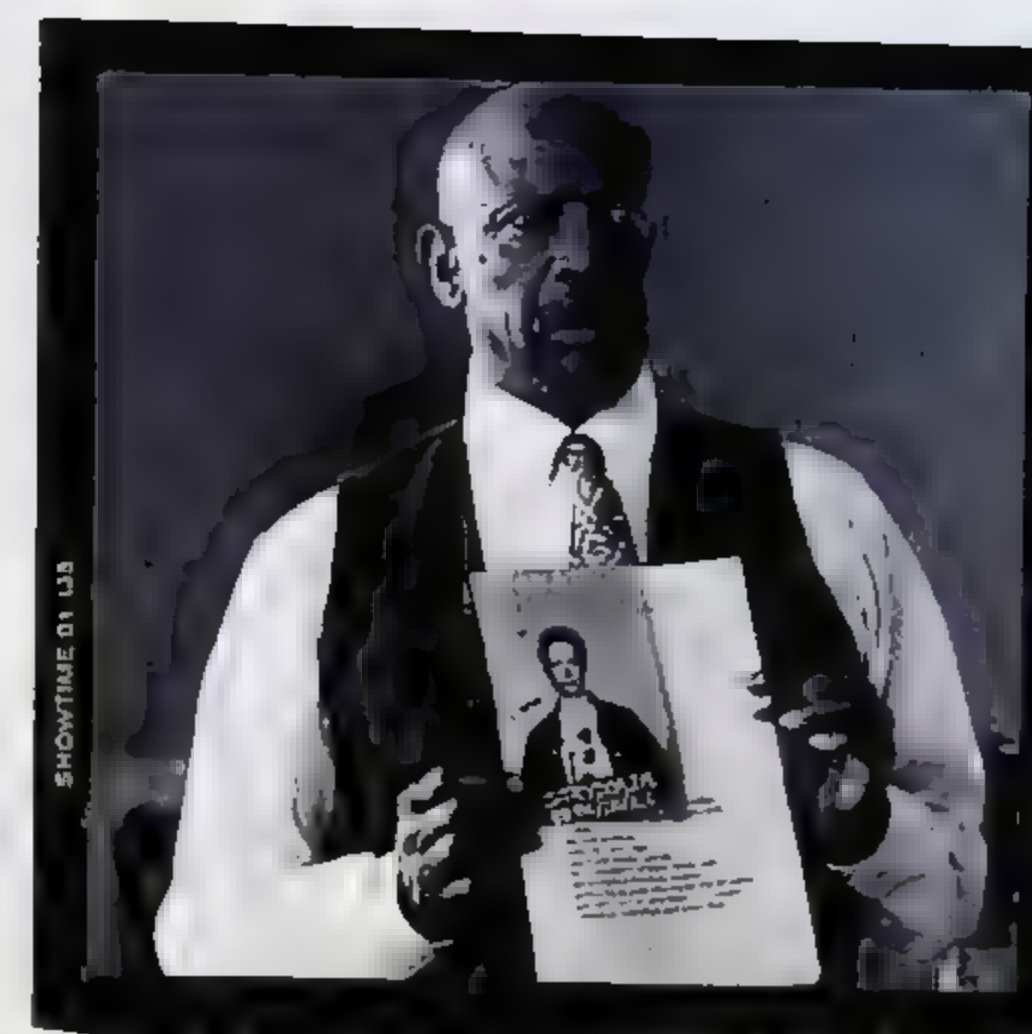
STARRING MATT DILLON, GARY SINISE, FAYE DUNAWAY, JOE MANTEGNA, WILLIAM FICHTNER DIRECTED BY KEVIN SPACEY

IT'S A ROBBERY gone awry (and in the movies, is there any other kind?) that compels crooks Dillon, Sinise, and Fichtner to hold the habitués of a Southern bar hostage. Pulling the strings as first-time director is Spacey, fresh from an Oscar on the other side of the camera for another neo-noir, *The Usual Suspects*. Spacey swears there's nothing too usual about this crime saga: "Violence in this film has consequences. I wanted to show that, and at the same time go out of my way not to show violence—but believe me, you know it's happening." That 85 percent of the action occurs in the bar was also appealing. "I thought I might bring strength to it because of my theater background," says Spacey. "I wasn't stepping into a first film that had 75 locations." Who knew Keyser Söze craved claustrophobia? (Nov. 15) <<BUZZ>> Watch for a strong performance by Faye Dunaway as the barkeep.

STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT

STARRING PATRICK STEWART, JONATHAN FRAKES, BRENT SPINER, LEVAR BURTON, MICHAEL DORN, MARINA SIRTIS, GATES MCFADDEN, ALFRE WOODARD, JAMES CROMWELL DIRECTED BY FRAKES

SOME FIVE-YEAR mission: The latest *Enterprise* adventure marks the 30th anniversary of the sci-fi franchise, and Trekkers are hoping the \$45 million *First Contact* will boost the faltering ratings of *Deep Space Nine* and *Voyager*. "This is a pivotal time," says Jonathan "Will Riker" Frakes, who joins the ranks of William Shatner and Leonard Nimoy by stepping behind the camera to direct *Trek* No. 8. "I fear that maybe we spread ourselves too thin with



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INSIDE

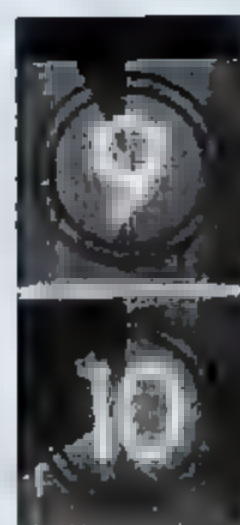
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NOVEMBER



DOG DAZE

Close's Cruella De Vil makes the fur fly in the new live-action *101 Dalmatians*

two shows." Fortunately for the first-time feature director, *First Contact* has all the right ingredients: The cast of *Next Generation* finally takes on the Federation's evil nemeses, the Borg—those lethal cybernetic 'bots whose monotone catchphrase "Resistance is futile" tickled fans in some of *TNG*'s best-loved episodes. The film also features a souped-up *Enterprise*, a romance for cyborg Data, and two Oscar nominees (Alfre Woodard and *Babe*'s James Cromwell). So do the Borg stand a Romulan's chance? "They're tougher than ever," says Frakes, "but always bet on

FALL MOVIE PREVIEW

the Federation." (Nov. 22) <<BUZZ>> With the franchise ailing, *First Contact* needs to earn at least as much as the last flick's \$75 million. If not, the sophomore *Trek* cast might not live long and prosper.

101 DALMATIANS

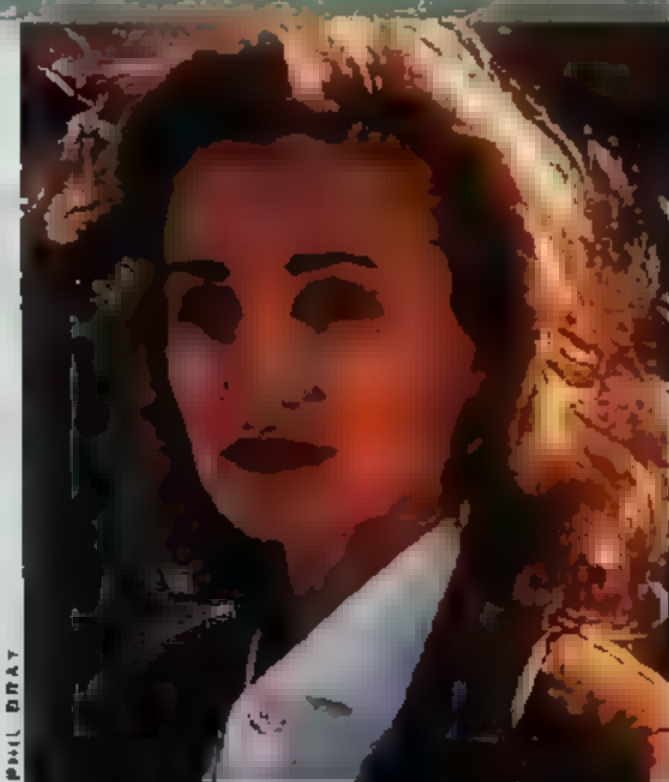
STARRING GLENN CLOSE, JEFF DANIELS, JOELY RICHARDSON, JOAN PLOWRIGHT
DIRECTED BY STEPHEN HEREK

SOON AFTER Joe Roth became Disney's film production head, he decided to turn the company's 1961 animated classic about Pongo, Perdy, and their very large brood into a live-action film. Close, however, thought the script by John Hughes "should be bitchier and funnier," she says. When she finally agreed to play Cruella De Vil, she mined the original version for appropriately wicked lines. "She said terrible things like 'Bash them in the head! Drown them!'" she recalls. "You have to have a well-defined villain, because then the whole deal is seeing the villain get her comeuppance."

Casting the fur-bearing actors proved even dicier. When England's Dalmatian Club wouldn't supply dogs, animal trainer Gary Gero (*Ace Ventura: Pet Detective*) advertised in British papers to find 200-plus Dalmatians. "We could only use them for a week,

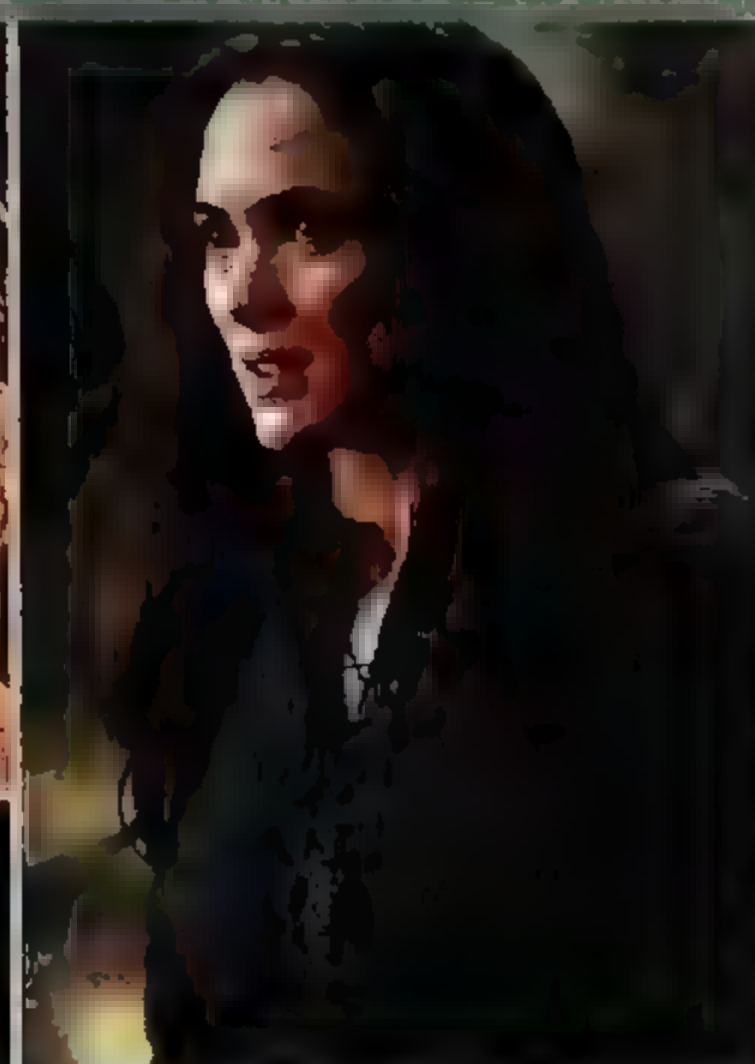
November deals a pair of aces into the Oscar race.

Ace No. 1: Fox's adaptation of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, a movie with such good buzz that even those at competing studios concede it could get nominations in every major category—meaning that stars Daniel Day-Lewis and Winona Ryder, supporting players Paul Scofield and Joan Allen, director Nicholas Hytner, and the film's screenwriter (some guy named Arthur Miller) could all be smiling next Feb. 11. Not so fast, though: Ace No. 2, the World War II love story *The English Patient*, is produced by Saul Zaentz (*Amadeus*); directed by Anthony Minghella (*Truly, Madly, Deeply*); stars Ralph Fiennes, Kristin Scott Thomas, and Juliette Binoche; and is released by Miramax, a company that—after securing 33 nominations for 12 movies in the last two years—knows how to run an Oscar campaign. And don't forget November's wild cards:



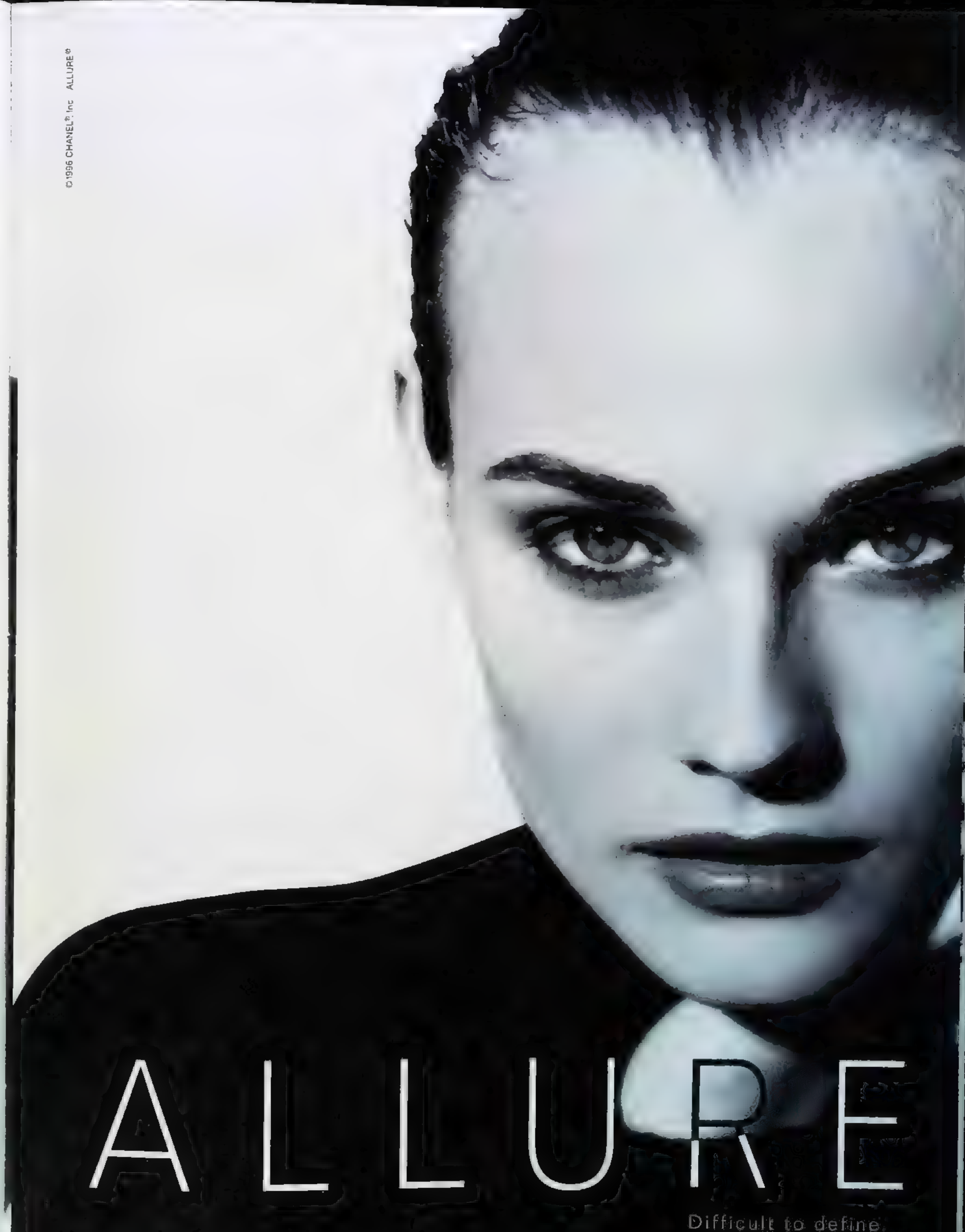
PATIENTLY WAITING

Thomas, Ryder may be up for Oscar gold



Shine, an Australian import that took Sundance by storm, will see if it can win raves at lower altitudes. Milos Forman's *The People vs. Larry Flynt*, with Woody Harrelson and Courtney (Anything Cher can do I can do better) Love, could be a mess or a masterpiece. And the kidnap thriller *Ransom* sounds popcorny, but then again, it's directed by Ron Howard and stars Mel Gibson. Hey, it's *Braveheart* meets *Apollo 13*... Maybe.

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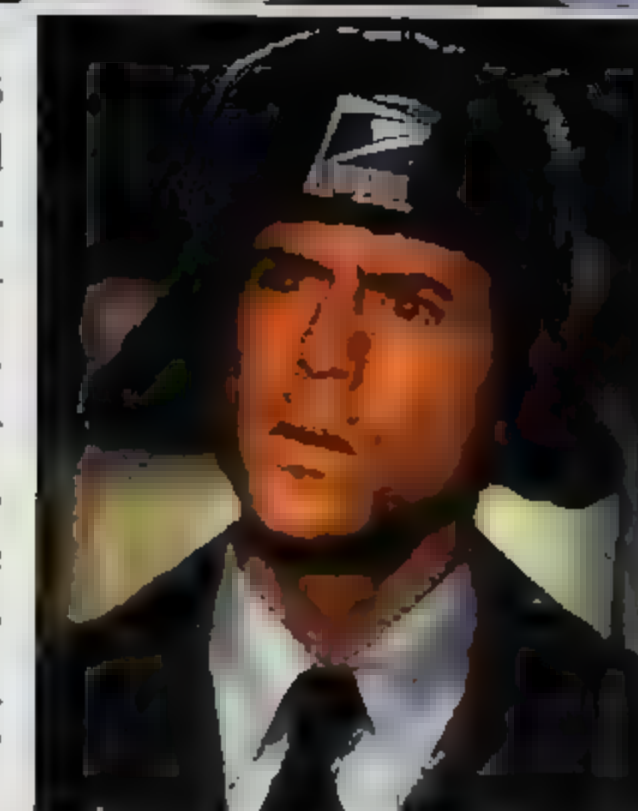
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maybe two," says Gero, who replaced each batch of 8-week-old pups when they outgrew the roles. None of the four-legged cast is keen on working with Close again. "There's a scene where I scream at a barnful of animals," she says. "The sheep looked kind of terrified." (Nov. 27) <<BUZZ>> It'll have legs at the box office (404 of them), and Close's over-the-top turn should inspire a new generation of drag queens.



SPACE JAM:

STARRING MICHAEL JORDAN, BUGS BUNNY, THE LOONEY TUNES, BILL MURRAY, WAYNE KNIIGHT DIRECTED BY JOE PYTKA

CAN BUGS BUNNY take it to the hoop? Can Michael Jordan act? And while we're asking, can Tweety trash-talk? These are some of the burning questions to be answered when the real world, the cartoon world, and the NBA collide in the Looney Tunes and Jordan's first original full-length feature. The plot: An evil intergalactic amusement-park owner seeking to boost business sends a goon squad to kidnap the Looney Tunes, and Bugs somehow talks these

FOWL PLAYS

Jam's Daffy Duck gets inside Jordan's head; Dear God's Kinnear writes a wrong

evildoers into a full-court duel to determine their fate. "This is worlds away from Disney," says animation codirector Tony Cervone. "This isn't a moralistic fairy tale. If they're the Merchant Ivory of animation, we're more like *Die Hard*."

How does Jordan fit in? When the evil space creatures rob some of the NBA's finest (including Charles Barkley, Patrick Ewing, and Muggsy Bogues) of their powers, Bugs recruits Jordan for the Tune Team. "I'm nervous about my acting," admits Jordan. "But I think I was pretty natural." (Nov. 15) <<BUZZ>> Warner is hoping for a slam dunk—and needs one: *Space Jam*'s budget reportedly topped \$100 million.

DEAR GOD

STARRING GREG KINNEAR, LAURIE METCALF, TIM CONWAY, MARIA PITILLO, JON SEDA, HECTOR ELIZONDO DIRECTED BY GARRY MARSHALL

I WAS A CON MAN on *Talk Soup* for three years and people seemed to buy that," says Kinnear about tackling his first lead film role. So he figured playing a crook who answers dead-letter-office letters to God—and tells their authors to send money—"was the next logical step."

Researching his \$22 million production, director Marshall came up with a hierarchy: "Biggest is God,

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PORN TO BE WILD

Harrelson's controversial *Hustler* honcho gets cozy with his Love interest in *The People vs. Larry Flynt*

second Santa, third Elvis." What he didn't know as well was Kinnear. "I was a guest on [Later], so I knew the man was alive," he says. "I didn't know if he was an actor." A viewing of *Sabrina* changed that—and it helped that potential leads Tom Hanks, Robin Williams, and Richard Dreyfuss didn't pan out. "If you read the fine print," says Kinnear, "Richard Simmons and Urkel passed as well before they got to me." (Nov. 8) <<BUZZ>> Kinnear's charm could scam some success, but with its same-weekend-as-*Ransom* opening, a "Dear God" letter might be wise.

THE PEOPLE VS. LARRY FLYNT

STARRING WOODY HARRELSON, COURTNEY LOVE,
EDWARD NORTON, JAMES CROMWELL
DIRECTED BY MILOS FORMAN

HAS THE DIRECTOR of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* lost his mind? For his first film in seven years, two-time Oscar winner Forman has chosen as his subject...the publisher of *Hustler* magazine. *Valmont* it ain't, but at least the casting isn't cuckoo. Harrelson, in a prosthetic beer belly,

looks mighty convincing as our man Flynt, the blue-collar porno magazine king who was paralyzed by a would-be assassin in 1978 (his gold-plated wheelchair was lent to the picture as a prop) and whose legal battles with Jerry Falwell ended up before the Supreme Court. And Love sounds just right as Flynt's stripper-bride, Althea Leasure. There's also Cromwell as junk bondster Charles Keating, plus some clever cameos by Donna Hanover, a.k.a. Mrs. Rudy Giuliani, as evangelist Ruth Carter Stapleton, Flynt himself as a judge, and Clinton political guru James Carville, who doubles as the film's master of spin. "Think about it," Carville pitches the flick: "Flynt's got a sixth-grade education. Becomes a millionaire. Gets mixed up with Falwell and Keating. Goes through the Supreme Court stuff. Almost gets assassinated. When you put it all together, it's a *Forrest Gump* kind of thing." (Nov. 1) <<BUZZ>> A brilliantly offbeat triumph or a blillig mistake. No middle ground.

SHINE

STARRING GEOFFREY RUSH, NOAH TAYLOR, ARMIN
MUELLER-STAHLE, LYNN REDGRAVE, GOOGIE
WITHERS, JOHN GIELGUD DIRECTED BY SCOTT HICKS

AUSTRALIAN PIANIST David Helfgott is the unlikely of movie heroes—a child prodigy who suffered a debilitating nervous break-

The 70s

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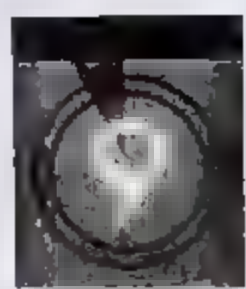


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down and didn't reassert his eccentric talent until a middle-aged romance tamed his inner demons. "He's the most extraordinary performer," says Rush, the actor who had to wrestle with Helfgott's hasty, idiosyncratic speech and intense keyboard style. "I don't mean this disparagingly, but he's like a clown. He's got an impishness that subverts all the conventions of a classical recital—he giggles and chats and then suddenly he will play with a prodigious talent." Greeted with standing ovations at this year's Sundance Film Festival, the \$4 million film triggered an intense bidding war, with Fine Line spending nearly \$2.5 million to win North American rights. Says director Hicks, who'd nurtured the project for 10 years, "It was like being caught in an avalanche." (Nov. 22) <<BUZZ>> Like *My Left Foot*, another true-life account of an artist overcoming adversity, *Shine* could triumph as an Oscar-nominated sleeper.

MAD DOG TIME

STARRING RICHARD DREYFUSS, GABRIEL BYRNE, JEFF GOLDBLUM, ELLEN BARKIN, DIANE LANE, GREGORY HINES, KYLE MACLACHLAN, PAUL ANKA, BURT REYNOLDS, BILLY IDOL, ANGIE EVERHART, JOEY BISHOP DIRECTED BY LARRY BISHOP

AS A KID, Larry Bishop—the son of Rat Pack regular Joey Bishop—hung out in the smoky shadows of Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin. Which may explain why a finger-snappin' sense of cool infuses *Mad Dog Time*, the novice director's tale of discord among a group of cocktail-club gangsters. Like *Pulp Fiction* and *The Usual Suspects*, *Mad Dog Time* was shot quickly (in 30 days) and cheaply (for \$8 million). Unlike those nouveau tough-guy flicks, Bishop calls it "the only gangster film that I've ever seen—with the exception of

Actors Getting In On the 'Action!

What is it about actors wanting to direct? With everyone from Tom Hanks (*That Thing You Do!*) to Al Pacino (*Looking for Richard*) stepping out of the camera's range to tackle the headaches lurking behind it, we asked some first-timers what the appeal is. Their answer: It's simple—as a director you get to...

CALL THE SHOTS: The craft service always stocks your favorite bagel—and you yell "Action!" Campbell Scott (*Dying Young*), who codirected *Big Night* with its star and his pal Stanley Tucci, says the cue was the only logistical detail they nalled down before starting: "When he was acting I'd say 'Action!' and 'Cut!' The rest of the time he would." The shoot went smoothly but wrapped with both dead tired. "A director's work never ends," marvels Tucci. Scott: "We thought we'd die."

CAST YOURSELF: "The problem with acting is you don't get to choose your work," explains Steve Buscemi, who went the Woody Allen/Barbra Streisand route by giving himself the lead in his *Trees Lounge*. "I [played] a part that was different from what I'd been doing," which helped him branch out and get over his beginner's jitters. "Acting relaxed me."

LEARN NEW TRICKS: Twenty-four days filming in a claustrophobic room without showing the actual walls was just the stretch *Albino Alligator* director Kevin Spacey needed: "I walk away from my first time completely hooked. I loved being the storyteller, and the challenge of learning." Will he do it again? "The needle's in my arm and I'm running out of serum." Guess so. —Marlon Hart



Albino director Spacey with Dillon

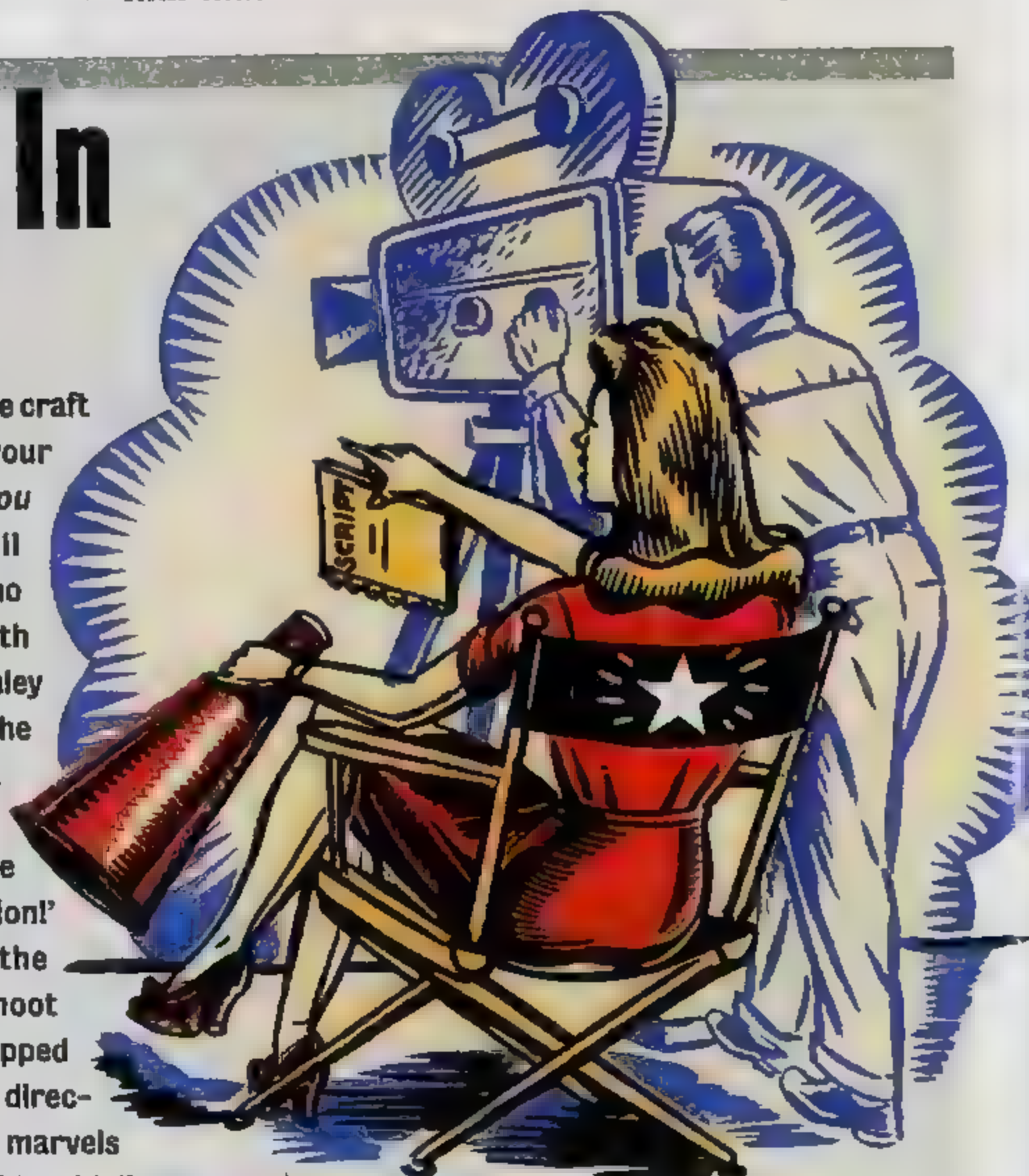
Hanks leads *That Thing You Do!*

ILLUSTRATION BY JONATHAN CARLSON

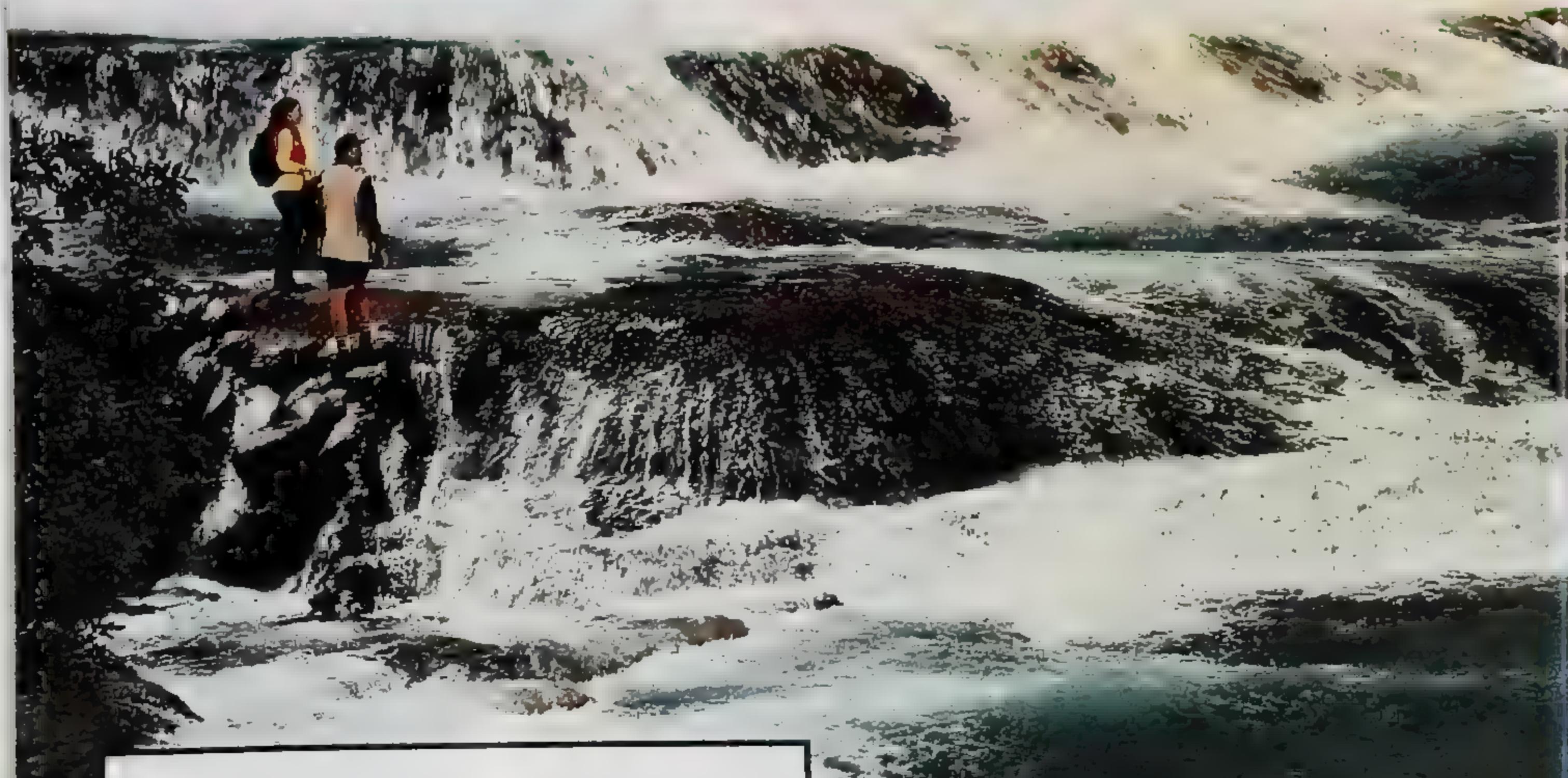
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FALL MOVIE PREVIEW

Ocean's 11—where the characters aren't desperate."

Getting Dreyfuss to play a psychotic crime lord named Vic was easy; he'd cut a deal with Bishop when they were teenagers at Beverly Hills High. "Ricky and I made a covenant that we would make movies one day," Bishop says, "and he was true to the covenant." And, like the rest of the cast, he worked for scale. (Nov. 1) <<BUZZ>> This isn't a fall-safe genre (witness *Things to Do in Denver When You're Dead*), but *Mad Dog Time* should easily earn back its small investment. Bishop is so confident, he's already planning another film with the same cast.

MOTHER NIGHT

STARRING NICK NOLTE, SHERYL LEE, ALAN ARKIN, JOHN GOODMAN, KIRSTEN DUNST, DAVID STRATHAIRN, ARYE GROSS
DIRECTED BY KEITH GORDON

UNLIKE MOST of us, director Gordon will always have some affection for the Nick Nolte-Julia Roberts dud *I Love Trouble*. Gordon, a former actor who specialized in geeky-teen roles (*Christine*, *Dressed to Kill*), wanted Nolte to read *Mother Night*, an adaptation of Kurt Vonnegut's 1962 novel about a WWII Allied spy later tried as a Nazi war criminal. After repeatedly getting the bum's rush from Nolte's agent, Gordon recounts, "I took a bit part in *I Love Trouble* just to slip him the script." By then, *Mother Night* had already been a grueling five years in the making, with both Anthony Hop-

kins and Robert Duvall attached to star. Finally, Nolte decided he wanted some "acting work" instead of "star work." "When you're doing smaller films," he says, "the attempt is to get the passion back into the film without the fear of whether or not it has to be a hit." (Nov. 1) <<BUZZ>> It's a specialty item, but a low-risk one—the \$6 million budget is less than Nolte himself usually gets paid.

SET IT OFF

STARRING JADA PINKETT, QUEEN LATIFAH, VIVICA FOX, KIMBERLY ELISE, BLAIR UNDERWOOD
DIRECTED BY F. GARY GRAY

IT'S *WAITING TO EXHALE* meets *Reservoir Dogs*: Four women (played by three actresses and one musician) are longtime friends facing life's trials together—and end up robbing banks. But the stars argue that it's a deeply personal drama about four women trying to escape the mean streets. "It's driven by emotion," says Pinkett (*The Nutty Professor*). "You really get involved with the characters and what pushes them over the edge." *Set It Off* does have explosive action sequences—Latifah even got to back a truck through a bank wall. "It was so intense at times," says Latifah, "we would do a scene and just have to all hug each other afterwards." Surely that never happened on *Reservoir Dogs*. (Nov. 6) <<BUZZ>> Aimed at African-American women—an infrequently served audience—it could surprise.



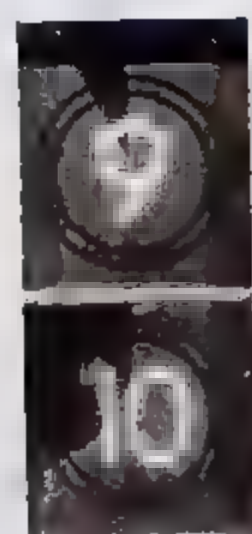
Nolte's secret
agent plays it cool
in *Mother Night*



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ALSO IN NOV



SMALL BUT SOULFUL

Thornton brings a psychotic edge to *Slingblade*; *Eighth Day*'s Duquenne passes on his joie de vivre to Auteuil; and *Stars*' Rowlands hooks up with Tomei



BREAKING THE WAVES

Director Lars von Trier used a handheld camera to shoot the story of a paralyzed newlywed who urges his virginal bride to take a lover. Newcomer Emily Watson, 29, who's winning raves as the wife, began with London's Royal Shakespeare Company, "but," she says, "that was, like, wenching and spear-carrying." Winner of Cannes' Grand Jury Prize. (Nov. 15)

RIDICULE

Combine heaving bosoms, witty banter, and a dash of *Dangerous Liaisons*, and you have this drama about courtiers to King Louis XVI whose lives depend on their acid tongues. "It's about how to be free without committing yourself to do bad things," says costar Judith Godrèche. Happily, that's a lesson the characters learn only by committing one sin after another. (Nov. 27)

UNHOOK THE STARS

Playing a widow who reinvents her life while befriending a troubled neighbor (Marisa Tomei), Gena Rowlands had an unusually sympathetic director: her 37-year-old son, actor Nick Cassavetes. "On the set, we completely separate the mother-son relationship," he insists. The only awkward moment: "when she spanked me because I didn't do something right." (Nov. 1)

SLINGBLADE

Writer-director-actor Billy Bob Thornton tells the story of a killer who leaves an asylum and becomes entangled with a mother and son, her abusive beau (Dwight Yoakam), and a family friend (John Ritter). It's "like *Tender Mercies* with a psychotic edge," Thornton says. "I guess you could call it an art picture." (Nov. 22)

THE EIGHTH DAY

On the seventh day, God rested. On the eighth, he created Georges, the angelic runaway with Down syndrome at the hub of Jaco Van Dormael's tale of a young man (Pascal Duquenne) who helps his suit-and-tie buddy, Harry (Daniel Auteuil), stop and smell *les fleurs*. Oh, and on the ninth day, Duquenne and Auteuil shared Cannes' Best Actor Prize. (Nov. 1)

LARGER THAN LIFE

The Elephant Man 2 is what cast and crew dubbed Howard Franklin's comedy about a motivational speaker (Bill Murray) whose dad bequeaths him a pachyderm. "It's a coming-of-age story," says Franklin. But don't forget the elephant jokes: Jack's attempt to cash in on his mammoth endowment leads to a cross-country trip and some memorable synchronized swimming. "Bill," says Franklin, "has found his favorite costar." (Nov. 22)

PLUS

Tilda Swinton (*Orlando*) and Amy Madigan play sisters confronting their differences in *Female Perversions*. Seattle's grunge scene gets the once-over in the documentary *Hype!*, featuring a never-seen performance of "Smells Like Teen Spirit" by Nirvana. The 1986 Tony winner *I'm Not Rappaport* hits the big screen, with Walter Matthau and Ossie Davis as the bickering buddies. Documentarian Greta Schiller delves into the '20s community of female artists and writers in *Paris Was a Woman*. On her first day of work, a pregnant French hotel room attendant wonders how long she can remain *A Single Girl*. And Hulk Hogan plays a billionaire with a Kris Kringle Komplex in *Santa With Muscles*.

A LITTLE BIT OF SINBAD AND A WHOLE LOT OF SOUL...

NATALIE COLE
CONFUNKSHUN
featuring Michael Cooper
and Felton Pilate

THE GAP BAND

AL GREEN

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Mars Attacks

DIRECTED BY
TIM BURTON

LAST DECEMBER, TEASERS for *Independence Day* revealed aliens blowing up the White House, and audiences went berserk. Will they whoop as loudly for *Mars Attacks!*, in which a green-skinned, skull-faced ambassador from the angry red planet lays waste to the U.S. Congress with a ray gun? >> Only time and trailers will tell. But computer-animated death rays won't be the only firepower in director Burton's \$70 million flight of fancy, a bubble-gum-trading-card-series adaptation that's part spoof of, part tribute to, tacky '50s monster movies, chichi '60s sci-fi thrillers, and corny '70s disaster flicks. *Mars* has something audiences haven't seen in '90s fun-house rides like *ID4*, *Twister*, and *Jurassic Park*: two bona fide A-list movie stars. Nicholson is ditsy President Dale; Close plays bitchy Mrs. President, a walking freezer in Nancy Reagan reds who tells her husband that if Martian emissaries visit, "They're not going to eat off the Van

STARRING
JACK NICHOLSON, GLENN CLOSE, MARTIN SHORT,
PIERCE BROSNAN, LUKAS HAAS, SARAH JESSICA
PARKER, MICHAEL J. FOX, NATALIE PORTMAN,
ROD STEIGER, PAUL WINFIELD, LISA MARIE, SYLVIA
SIDNEY, DANNY DEVITO, TOM JONES, ANNETTE
BENING, PAM GRIER, JIM BROWN

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Buren china." Or is that three top-billed star turns? In one of umpteen nods to *Dr. Strangelove*, Nicholson plays an additional role—the blond, twangy-talkin' Vegas hotel developer Art Land. "That was Jack's suggestion," says Burton. "It just seemed like that kind of movie."

It almost wasn't *any* kind of movie when Warner balked at Burton's initial \$100 million budget. Why so pricey? In part because he wanted stop-motion puppet animation for his aliens, à la *Nightmare Before Christmas*, to get "the quality of those old Ray Harryhausen movies." But then George Lucas' Industrial Light & Magic did a test reel that persuaded Burton to go with computer-graphics animation. The cost dropped \$30 million, and Warner gave the green light.

Live-action filming wrapped in June. But as ILM works at warp speed to con-



UNDER ATTACK

Ghosts' Goldberg, Jim Pickens Jr.; *Mars'* Nicholson, Close

jure invasion antics that the actors only imagined, will Burton also shoot more footage with his human cast? He says no, but Haas, who plays a "kinda stupid" Kansas teen out to vanquish the invaders, says he may get another crack at his climactic speech: "There's a possibility we're gonna go back. We didn't want it to be too emotional at the end—it's such a sarcastic, satirical story." (Dec. 13) << BUZZ >> *ID's* success should help (much of the film is said to play like an inspired parody) and hurt—to recoup its cost, *Mars* will have to seem like more than just a smart spoof.



LIKE AN EVIL SPECTRE from America's divided racial past, Byron De la Beckwith, the convicted murderer of civil rights leader Medgar Evers, haunted the making of *Ghosts of Mississippi*. Filming in Jackson, Miss., where De la Beckwith, whose two previous trials resulted in hung juries, was finally found guilty of the 1963 murder in 1994, Reiner and his crew found themselves working within 50 yards of the killer, now inside the Hinds County Courthouse jail. During a jail tour, Reiner saw him asleep, his cell strewn with racist literature. "It was bizarre," he says. "It's just as well [he was sleeping] because I don't know if I could have talked to him." Woods, who ages 30 years as De la Beckwith, turned down a jailhouse visit. "I had no desire to meet the guy," he says adamantly. >> Producer Frederick Zollo (*Mississippi Burning*) brought the project to

DIRECTED BY

ROB REINER

Reiner, who'd long wanted to make a movie about the civil rights movement but, "being white, never felt [I had] the right to do it." But he saw that Bobby DeLaughter, the white assistant DA who ultimately brought the case to justice, "could be my way into the subject." Adds Baldwin, who plays DeLaughter, "Bob was an innocent. Others said, 'Why bring all this up again?' But Bob understood that the criminal justice system is a great linchpin of a lot of civil rights problems in this country." >> Obsessed with accuracy, Reiner and his cast, including Goldberg as Evers' widow, Myrlie, worked closely with the family. Evers' sons, Darrell and Van, play themselves, while his daughter Reena opted to play a juror. (Martin Luther King Jr.'s daughter Yolanda plays Reena.) Myrlie even offered the director such personal effects as the wallet, still coated with dried blood, that Evers was carrying the night he was murdered. >> But when Hollywood authenticity collided with real emotions, the results were troubling. When Woods first met Evers' widow, he was in full makeup. "We were having lunch with Rob," he explains. "Reena had gotten so used to me, she'd forgotten [I was in makeup]. 'Mama, I want you to meet Jimmy,' she said. Myrlie turned around, put out her hand, and froze. I said, 'Mrs. Evers, I'm here with you on this.' But it took her about half an hour to get over it." "It was tough," she later told the actor, "because of everything we went through with that man." (Dec. 20) << BUZZ >> Expectations are high; if the film is as full as its subject matter, Reiner will finally have his ticket to the big time.

Ghosts of Mississippi

ALEC BALDWIN, JAMES WOODS, WHOOP! GOLDBERG, CRAIG T. NELSON, WAYNE ROGERS, WILLIAM H. MACY, MICHAEL O'KEEFE, DARRELL EVERS, YOLANDA KING

STARRING

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BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD
DO AMERICA

STARRING BEAVIS, BUTT-HEAD

DIRECTED BY MIKE JUDGE

DIRECTOR JUDGE sums it up thusly: "It's a buddy picture. And that's spelled with two ts." Okay. This "butty" movie showcasing MTV's two spoty-faced cartoon morons follows the mini-metalheads as they take to the road in search of their stolen television. Though the film should have been a no-brainer, its trip to the big screen was actually way too complicated for anything involving the word *butt-head*: Back in 1993, mogul David Geffen bought the rights and wanted to do a live-action version of the film, an idea Judge apparently thought sucked. (SNL alums Adam

Sandler and David Spade were possible leads.) Finally, Paramount wrestled the rights away from Geffen, reportedly by winning a coin toss. In its final cartoon form, this addition to the growing genre of Idiot Flicks promises to be loaded with as-yet-unannounced cameos as well as songs from Red Hot Chili Peppers and White Zombie. (Dec. 20) <<BUZZ>> Hard to know whether B&B mania peaked too soon for this movie. (Huh-huh. We said *hard*.)

DAYLIGHT

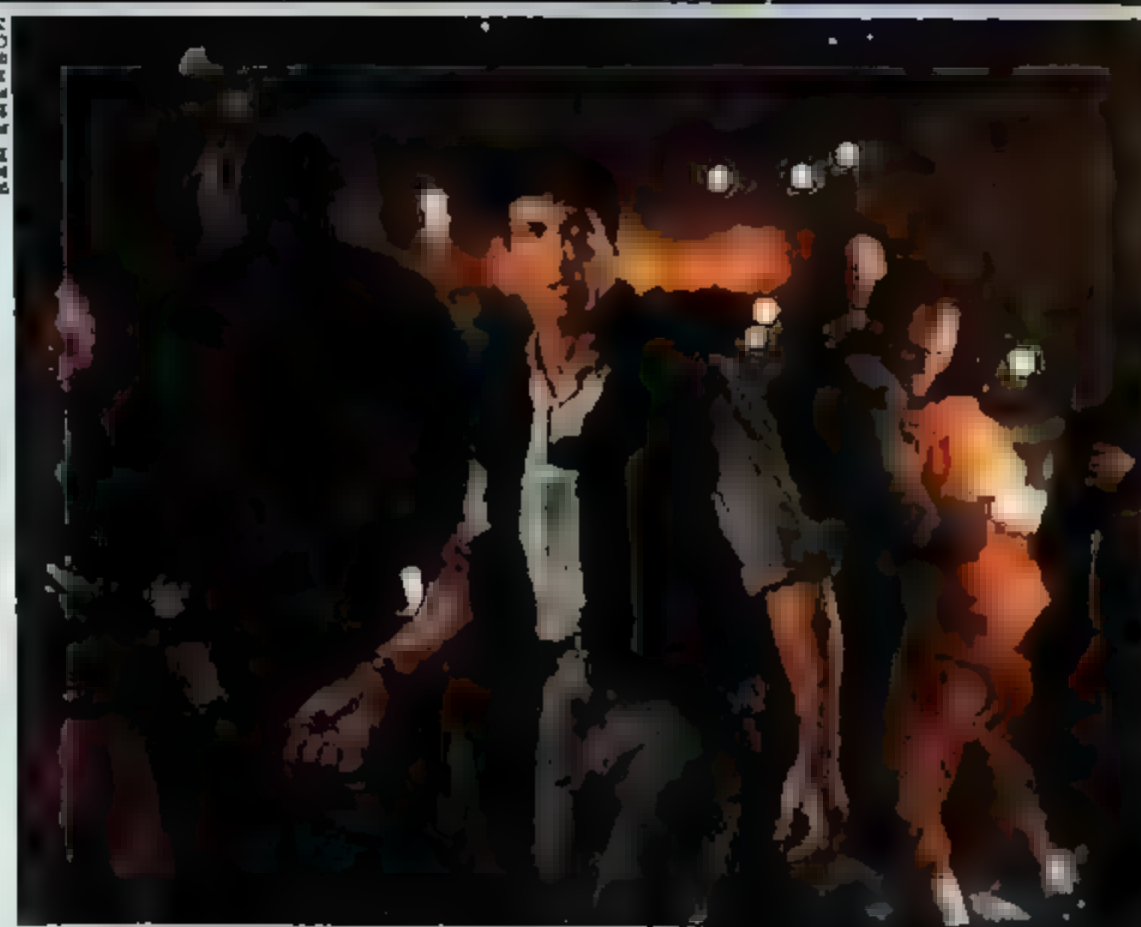
STARRING SYLVESTER STALLONE, AMY BRENNEMAN, STAN SHAW, VIGGO MORTENSEN, CLAIRE BLOOM, RENOLY SANTIAGO, MARCELLO THEDFORD, SAGE STALLONE DIRECTED BY ROB COHEN

HOLLYWOOD HAS ALREADY branded the latest Stallone testosterone display—for which he pulled down \$17.5 million of its \$80 million budget—*Die Hard in a Tunnel*, but director Rob Cohen (*Dragonheart*) insists it's more like *The Poseidon Adventure Under the Hudson*. That's mostly because there's no terrorist involved: An explosion seals off a New Jersey-to-Manhattan tunnel, forcing ex-Emergency Medical Services chief Stallone to battle his way in and save a cross section of New Yorkers from the rising waters. Though the company filmed for three weeks in New York, including one Saturday night in front of the Midtown Tunnel, it had to travel to Rome's Cinecitta Studios to find enough room to build a 1,600-foot faux tunnel. "Hollywood's backlots are dedicated to tours and phony storefronts," says Cohen. "We needed to build an enormous structure, plus have access to pools of water and floodable stages. But we brought in the proper Styrofoam cups, newspapers, and magazines so it would look just like New York." Not to mention 200 rats. (Dec. 6) <<BUZZ>> Stallone hopes *Daylight* will be his action-film farewell—but after *The Specialist* and *Assassins*, audiences may have already said their goodbyes.

HAMLET

STARRING KENNETH BRANAGH, KATE WINSLET, DEREK JACOBI, JULIE CHRISTIE, ROBIN WILLIAMS, BILLY CRYSTAL, JACK LEMMON, GERARD DEPARDIEU, ROSEMARY HARRIS, CHARLTON HESTON, JOHN GIELGUD, RUFUS SEWELL
DIRECTED BY BRANAGH

ALAS, POOR BRANAGH: After the success of his 1989 *Henry V*, he planned to double-dare the ghost of Laurence Olivier by next filming Shakespeare's tale of the melancholy Dane with him-



GUTTER BALLS?

>> The boys on the snide hit the big time; Stallone hopes that audiences dig his new tunnel-adventure, *Daylight*

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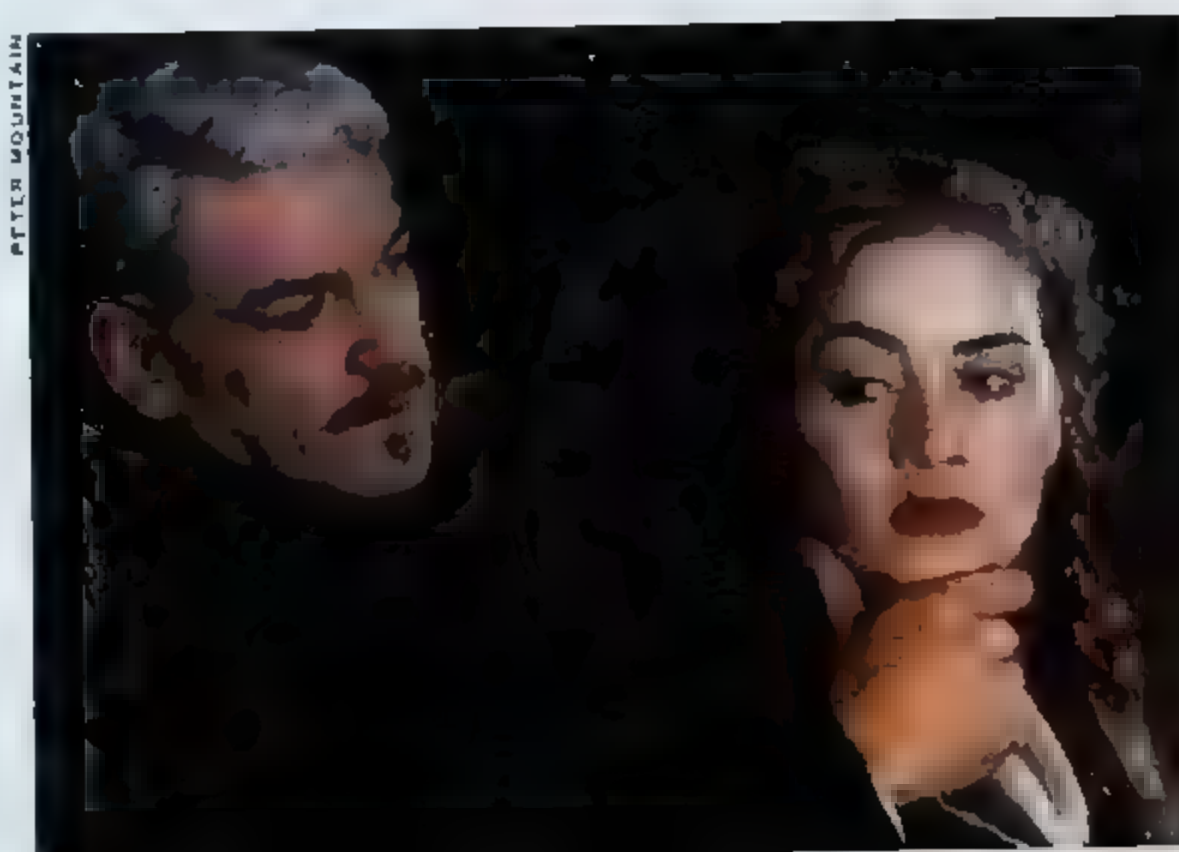
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MAD ABOUT YOU

>> Branagh's great Dane torments Winslet's Ophelia in his new *Hamlet*

self as director and dyed-blond star. But it was not to be, once Mel Gibson got his paws on the role for Franco Zeffirelli's 1990 movie. "It was obviously foolish and impossible at that stage," says Branagh. "But that film was so different from what I hoped to do with it." Financing his own \$18 million, 70-millimeter-format version took years of campaigning by Branagh. Its key innovation: not a single unkind

textual cut—and thus a planned running time, unless Branagh buckles to exhibitor grumbings, of three hours, 30 minutes. Even at that, dialogue barrels by "quick as we could possibly make it," says Branagh. "I don't believe Hamlet is predisposed to be sad. He's a passionate, lively, volatile man. We've banished any self-conscious tragedy." Indeed, with Williams (as a walrus-mustached Osric) and Crystal (as a grave digger) aboard, who could keep a straight face? Says the ex-Oscars host, "I think at one point even Soupy Sales was going to play Marcellus." (Dec. 25) <<BUZZ>> Kenneth, get thee to a shorter cut.

THE EVENING STAR

STARRING SHIRLEY MACLAINE, JACK NICHOLSON, BILL PAXTON, JULIETTE LEWIS, SCOTT WOLF, MACKENZIE ASTIN, GEORGE NEWBERN, MARION ROSS, MIRANDA RICHARDSON DIRECTED BY ROBERT HARLING

THINK TERRIFIED would be putting it mildly," MacLaine says of making a sequel to 1983's Best Picture Oscar winner *Terms of Endearment* that focuses on Aurora Greenway, the role that scored

MacLaine a Best Actress Oscar. More comedic than *Terms*, "it's an examination of the further adventures of Aurora and how she's done as a grandmother," says MacLaine. "She has not done very well, I might add, and that's where the comedy comes from."

The sequel, set 15 years after *Terms*, has been in the works since 1992, when Paramount optioned the rights to Larry McMurtry's novel. When James L. Brooks, who adapted *Terms* for the screen, passed on the sequel, screenwriter Harling (*Steel Magnolias*) stepped in to direct. The Houston shoot was bedeviled by ailments: Ross (*Happy Days*), who plays Aurora's faithful housekeeper, was stricken with pneumonia, and production shut down for three weeks when a virus settled in MacLaine's right cheek.

A relatively healthy Nicholson spent four days shooting four short scenes in which he reprises his role as Aurora's onetime paramour, while Paxton plays Aurora's current lover—yup, *lover*. "It's an Oedipal thing," says Paxton. "This is going to be the mother of all Christmas films." (Dec. 25) <<BUZZ>> It's no *Terms*, but on its own terms, not bad.

IN LOVE AND WAR

STARRING SANDRA BULLOCK, CHRIS O'DONNELL, MACKENZIE ASTIN DIRECTED BY RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH

AN ERNEST HEMINGWAY biopic that might also have been titled *The Sun Always Rises—But Not Necessarily for Julia Roberts*. The star wanted \$12 million to play the female lead in the supposedly true tale of a 27-year-old nurse who fell for 19-year-old Hemingway while he was recuperating in an Italian hospital during World War I. New Line hired Bullock instead, for a bargain-basement \$10.5 million. As for O'Donnell, who plays the Pulitzer Prize winner-to-be, he's still clipping coupons, making probably half of Bullock's paycheck. But enough about money—this is *literature*. The film is based on a book by Henry Villard, who was pals with the author in 1918. Villard died earlier this year, but not before his son Dimitri ushered the property into production. "It's a classic story of a woman torn between her heart and her head," he says, which is pretty much the argument he used to get Attenborough to sign up. "I'm not a big Hemingway fan," the filmmaker admits. "I'm not madly in favor of bullfighting and shooting animals. But Hemingway *does* make a marvelous movie hero." (Dec. 25) <<BUZZ>> You don't get hotter than Bullock and O'Donnell...but Sir Richard's last biopic, *Chaplin*, was no *Gandhi*.

THE ICE STORM

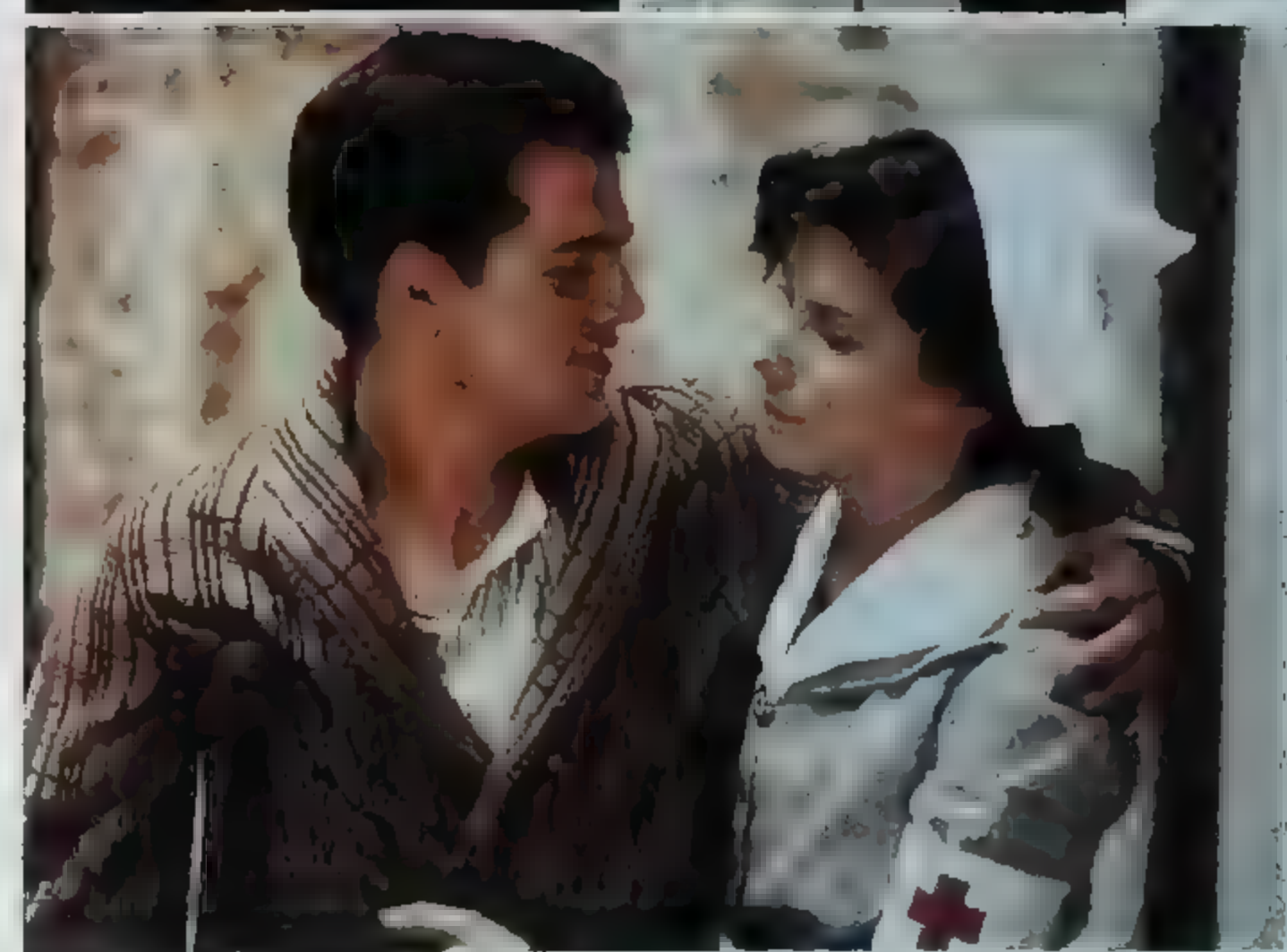
STARRING KEVIN KLINE, SIGOURNEY WEAVER, TOBEY MAGUIRE, JOAN ALLEN, CHRISTINA RICCI, ELIJAH WOOD DIRECTED BY ANG LEE

AFTER EXAMINING the ties binding English clans together in *Sense and Sensibility*, Lee turns to "something grittier": the meltdown of a nuclear Connecticut family, circa 1973. Adapted from Rick Moody's novel, the suburban scenario teems with talk of est and the Watergate hearings. Yet leaning hard on period trappings would have been "a trap," says Lee. "Not everybody in 1973 was into polyester. You don't want to make it *The Brady Bunch*." Not much danger of that with so many screwed-up souls on screen. While one dad (Kline) philanders with his neighbor's spouse (Weaver), his estranged wife (Allen), son (Maguire), and daughter (Ricci) act out their anger and loneliness—all while the town's hipsters prepare for a



THE MAMMA AND THE PAPA

>> MacLaine's *Star* rises again; Weaver lashes out in *Ice*; Bullock, O'Donnell in *Love*



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SHOP AND STOP

Angel Washington descends on Houston, the *Preacher's Wife*; Roth takes Barrymore for a ride in *Everyone Says...*

wife-swapping party. Ricci's only heartbreak was having to play a fashion victim. "I was forced to wear hip-hugger sailor pants and toe socks," she grimaces. "With a different thing for each toe, like gloves for your feet. Disgusting. And Ang loved them. He's like: 'Okay. Where is toe socks? Put on toe socks.' I couldn't talk him out of them." (Dec. 20) <<BUZZ>> Next to K-tel albums, '70s nostalgia doesn't get any better. And wait till you see Weaver looking spookily like a circa-*Klute* Jane Fonda—but, promises Lee, "with more sense of humor."

JERRY MAGUIRE

STARRING TOM CRUISE, CUBA GOODING JR., RENEE ZELLWEGER, KELLY PRESTON, BONNIE HUNT
DIRECTED BY CAMERON CROWE

TOM CRUISE...LOSER? The suspension of disbelief might be even harder to pull off given the \$20 million he got for this role. But here the

erstwhile top gun is down on his luck as a superslick sports agent who suddenly loses his high-powered job, his fair-weather fiancée (Preston), and his friends.

Writer-director Crowe (*Singles*) promises a Cruise who's surprisingly "funny and vulnerable—and generous, too. He's in almost every scene, yet all the supporting characters get to shine." According to Gooding, who plays Cruise's wide-receiver pal, while "any movie he's involved in is automatically a Tom Cruise vehicle, I think it is an ensemble." Among all the support, look for Eric Stoltz popping up again as Vahlere, the same fellow who threw the graduation party every year in Crowe's *Say Anything*.

If Cruise's presence raises the stakes, it can also lower the pressure. "It was one of the most relaxed environments I've been in," swears Gooding. "This movie *did* have, like, I dunno, 50 producers running around—but at the same time, because it's a Tom Cruise thing, I guess, we never saw one studio executive on the set." (Dec. 13) <<BUZZ>> Surprisingly little; production was eerily quiet. But we hear this Cruise guy has a pretty good track record.

MARVIN'S ROOM

STARRING MERYL STREEP, DIANE KEATON, LEONARDO DICAPRIO, ROBERT DE NIRO, GWEN VERDON, HUME CRONYN DIRECTED BY JERRY ZAKS

CAN A FLORIDA FAMILY cope with terminal illness, sibling rivalry, parent-child estrangement, and—the ultimate test—a visit to Disney World? Playwright Scott McPherson made the answers improbably hilarious in his 1991 Off Broadway play. His first draft of the screenplay, completed shortly before he died of AIDS complications at 33, was strong enough to interest Streep. After John Guare (*Six Degrees of Separation*) did a polish, Streep changed roles from timid, kindly, leukemia-stricken spinster Bessie (Keaton was cast instead) to Bessie's estranged sister, Lee, a blond, tough-as-nails hairdresser who returns with her sons (Dicaprio and Hal Scardino) to help the ailing Bessie, their dotty aunt (Verdon), and their bedridden father (Cronyn). "In the play, Lee's not on stage till about 40 minutes in," says Guare. "Now she's in the first scene, which is more balanced." Zaks, a theater ace making his film-directing debut, found Streep and Keaton a study in contrast. "I think Meryl's got a little more confidence in her ability than Diane. Diane's very hard on herself. I don't think she appreciates how good she is. I don't think Meryl has that problem." (Dec. 15) <<BUZZ>> Leukemia and senility? The words *tough sell* come to mind. Rave reviews will be essential.

cameras rolling, although what she's going to do with the film is unclear. "It's magnificent, but the tempo changes," Marshall says of the choir's transformation. "Maybe we can use it in the credits." (Dec. 20) <<BUZZ>> Expectations are as heavenly as Houston's box office track record.

EVERYONE SAYS I LOVE YOU

STARRING ALAN ALDA, DREW BARRYMORE, BILLY CRUDDUP, WOODY ALLEN, LUKAS HAAS, GABY HOFFMANN, NATASHA LYONNE, EDWARD NORTON, NATALIE PORTMAN, JULIA ROBERTS, TIM ROTH, GOLDIE HAWN DIRECTED BY ALLEN

GOLDIE HAWN dances on the banks of the Seine. Julia Roberts warbles. And even Woody carries a tune. But despite all appearances, Allen's 26th film is far from a full-blown musical à la *Evita*. "Madonna is a singer who's acting," says Jean Doumanian, Allen's longtime producer. "In Woody's movie we have actresses sing. There's a difference, you know."

inter

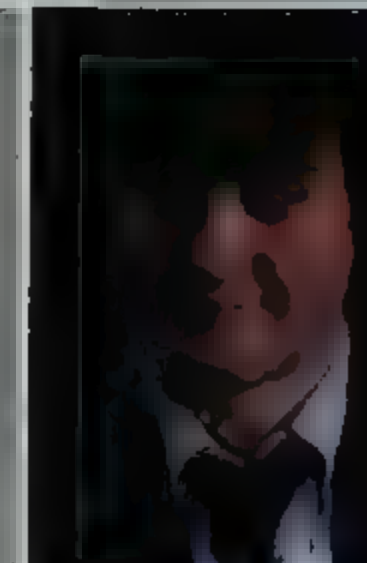
you might think, you *can* tell them apart, even if the hype all sounds the same. Just follow this simple formula and fill in the beefcakey blanks: Name (A) is only age (B), but his physical characteristic (C) and acting style (D) already have Hollywood saying he's a leading man. This season, there's his scene-stealing role as character (E) in movie (F), followed by a startling change of pace as role (G) in movie (H), guaranteed to get people talking. Watch out, more established leading man (I)!

A. Skeet Ulrich
B. 26
C. Grungy good looks
D. Raw-and-rude scruffiness
E. A miraculous healer
F. *Touch*
G. Neve Campbell's boyfriend
H. *Scream*
I. Johnny Depp

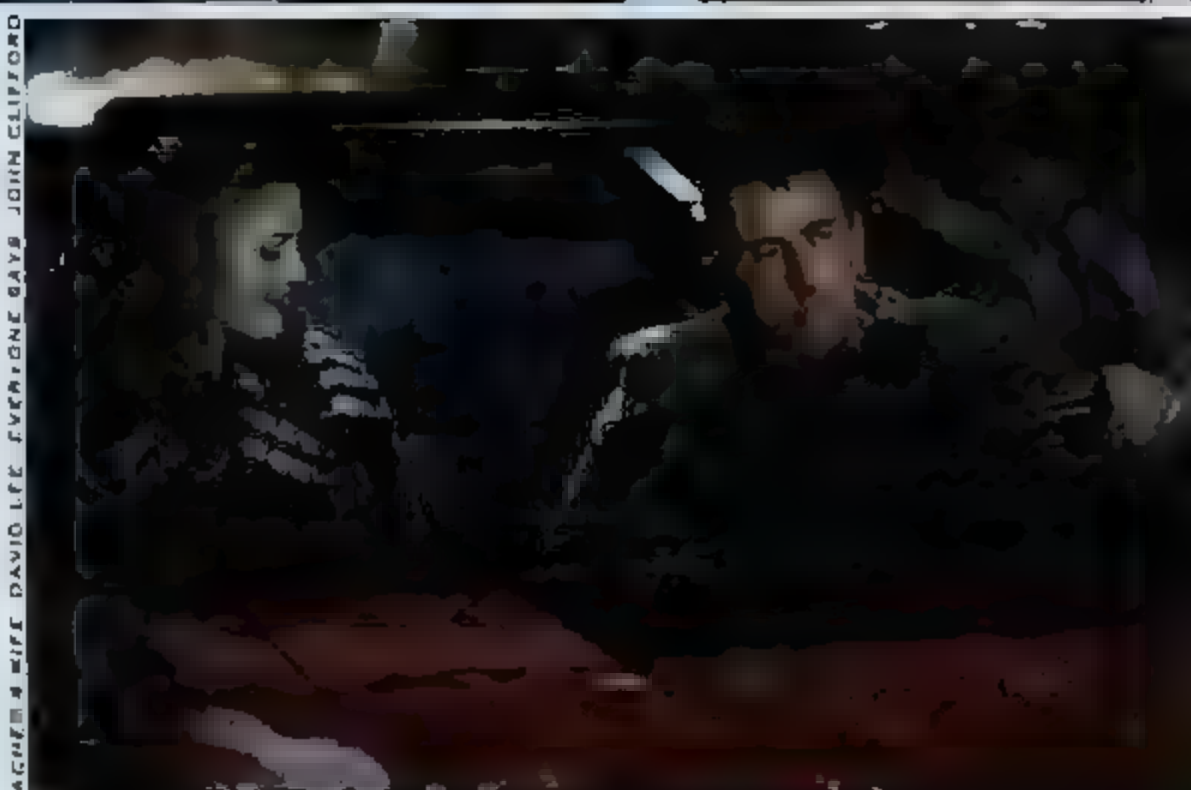


A. Billy Crudup
B. 27
C. Boyish good looks
D. Hyperkinetic energy
E. A juvenile delinquent-turned-killer
F. *Sleepers*
G. A long-distance runner
H. *Pro*
I. Tom Cruise

A. Viggo Mortensen
B. 37
C. Menacing good looks
D. Smoldering restraint
E. A *Gone With the Wind*-type suitor
F. *The Portrait of a Lady*
G. An arrogant bastard
H. *Daylight*
I. Jeff Bridges



A. Tobey Maguire
B. 21
C. Impish good looks
D. Untutored charm
E. A confused '70s teenager
F. *The Ice Storm*
G. Who knows?
H. Woody Allen's next film
I. Chris O'Donnell



SHOP AND STOP

► Angel Washington descends on Houston, the *Preacher's Wife*; Roth takes Barrymore for a ride in *Everyone Says...*

wife-swapping party. Ricci's only heartbreak was having to play a fashion victim. "I was forced to wear hip-hugger sailor pants and *toe socks*," she grimaces. "With a different thing for each toe, like gloves for your feet. Disgusting. And Ang *loved* them. He's like: 'Okay. Where is toe socks? Put on toe socks.' I couldn't talk him out of them." (Dec. 20) <<BUZZ>> Next to K-tel albums, '70s nostalgia doesn't get any better. And wait till you see Weaver looking spookily like a circa-*Klute* Jane Fonda—but, promises Lee, "with more sense of humor."

JERRY MAGUIRE

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DIRECTED BY CAMERON CROWE

TOM CRUISE...LOSER? The suspension of disbelief might be even harder to pull off given the \$20 million he got for this role. But here the

THE PREACHER'S WIFE

STARRING DENZEL WASHINGTON, WHITNEY HOUSTON, COURTNEY B. VANCE, LIONEL RICHIE
DIRECTED BY PENNY MARSHALL

DURING MARSHALL'S remake of *The Bishop's Wife*, the 1947 comedy about an angel who comes to help a troubled ministry, the phrase "getting into the spirit" was taken literally. When the film crew moved Washington (the angel) and Houston, who plays the wife of a minister (Vance), to the interior of a Newark church, the diva diverged from the script and let her vocals rip. "It was serious singing going on in there," says Washington, who admits, "I can't sing a note. I listened and enjoyed the show." And quite a show it was: "You call Him in there and He comes," says Vance. "Penny was yelling 'Cut,' and Whitney said, 'You can't stop the spirit,' and I grabbed the microphone and said, 'You can't call Him in here if you don't want Him to come.' One woman got the Holy Spirit, and the crew tried to call the medics." A mystified Marshall kept the

cameras rolling, although what she's going to do with the film is unclear. "It's magnificent, but the tempo changes," Marshall says of the choir's transformation. "Maybe we can use it in the credits." (Dec. 20) <<BUZZ>> Expectations are as heavenly as Houston's box office track record.

EVERYONE SAYS I LOVE YOU

STARRING ALAN ALDA, DREW BARRYMORE, BILLY CRUDUP, WOODY ALLEN, LUKAS HAAS, GABY HOFFMANN, NATASHA LYONNE, EDWARD NORTON, NATALIE PORTMAN, JULIA ROBERTS, TIM ROTH, GOLDIE HAWN
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The Boys of Winter

THE PROBLEM WITH being the next big thing is that no sooner have you arrived than people start lining up to be the next *you*. This summer's *A Time to Kill* brought us Matthew McConaughey, billed as the next Brad Pitt; this fall, McConaughey will already be old news. Who's the next near-today, gone-tomorrow superstar? Contrary to what

you might think, you *can* tell them apart, even if the hype all sounds the same. Just follow this simple formula and fill in the beefcakey blanks: Name (A) is only age (B), but his physical characteristic (C) and acting style (D) already have Hollywood saying he's a leading man. This season, there's his scene-stealing role as character (E) in movie (F), followed by a startling change of pace as role (G) in movie (H), guaranteed to get people talking. Watch out, more established leading man (I)!



A. Johnathon Schaech
B. 26
C. Brooding good looks
D. Quiet affability
E. The lead singer
F. *That Thing You Do!*
G. Gwyneth Paltrow's hapless flancé
H. *Killronan*
I. Peter Gallagher



A. Skat Ulrich
B. 26
C. Grungy good looks
D. Raw-and-rude scruffiness
E. A miraculous healer
F. *Touch*
G. Neve Campbell's boyfriend
H. *Scream*
I. Johnny Depp



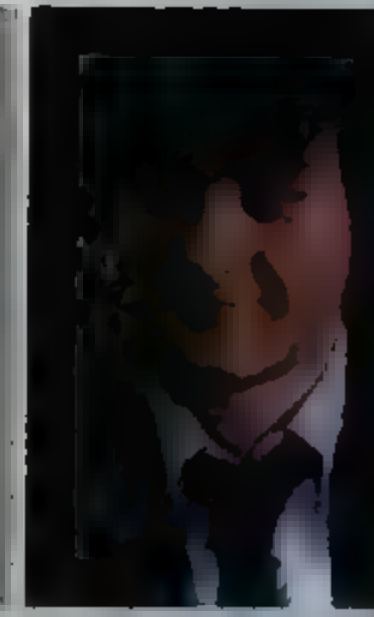
A. Billy Crudup
B. 27
C. Boyish good looks
D. Hyperkinetic energy
E. A juvenile delinquent-turned-killer
F. *Sleepers*
G. A long-distance runner
H. *Pro*
I. Tom Cruise



A. Vince Vaughn
B. 26
C. Goofy good looks
D. Free-and-easy improvisation
E. A young single guy
F. *Swingers*
G. A nature photographer
H. *Lost World (Jurassic Park II)*
I. Tom Hanks



A. Viggo Mortensen
B. 37
C. Menacing good looks
D. Smoldering restraint
E. A *Gone With the Wind*-type suitor
F. *The Portrait of a Lady*
G. An arrogant bastard
H. *Daylight*
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A. Tobey Maguire
B. 21
C. Impish good looks
D. Untutored charm
E. A confused '70s teenager
F. *The Ice Storm*
G. Who knows?
H. Woody Allen's next film
I. Chris O'Donnell

9
10
11
12
DECEMBER

"It's based on what we all go through when we fall in love, whether we're 18 or 45 or 60," says Hawn, who plays the wife of Alda, the ex-wife of Allen, and the mother of five half- and step-siblings. Will the Farrow-style brood invite certain comparisons? Duh. But speculation should really center on whether Allen will send a supporting actress—perhaps new



AMERICAN MARSHA BLACKBURN, EVITA DAVID APPELBY

face Lyonne, who "sort of narrates the film," says Hawn—to the Oscar podium for the third year running. Let the guessing games begin. (Dec. 25) <<BUZZ>> Sling it again. Woody's on a roll.

EVITA

STARRING MADONNA, ANTONIO BANDERAS,
JONATHAN PRYCE DIRECTED BY ALAN PARKER

IN ITS MARCH to the big screen, Andrew Lloyd Webber's politically prickly musical about Eva Perón's rise to power in Argentina derailed 20 years' worth of directors and stars, from Ken Russell to Oliver Stone, from Meryl Streep to Michelle Pfeiffer. The cinematic hot potato bounced to Parker when Cinergi bought the rights from producer Robert Stigwood. At the time, Pfeiffer was still to star—although, with a new baby, she wasn't keen on globe-trotting. Then, says Parker, "I got this letter from Madonna, saying no one else could do it as well as she could. I was quite taken with it." While Madonna's presence sparked controversy—Argentinean politicians protested the Material Girl, and a Catholic archbishop tried to ban her at a church in Budapest—"we just plowed onward," says Parker of his \$55 million film, "and suddenly the tide turned." (Dec. 25) <<BUZZ>> A 10-minute trailer inspired cries of "Viva Madonna!" in Cannes, but any non-animated musical—especially one about Argentinean politics—is hard to market in America.

MY FELLOW AMERICANS

STARRING JACK LEMMON, JAMES GARNER,
DAN AYKROYD DIRECTED BY PETER SEGAL

LEMMON PLAYS a conservative ex-President with a cantankerous streak. Garner plays a liberal ex-President with a libidinous streak. Can two former leaders of the free world travel across America together without driving each other crazy? Throw in Aykroyd as the current Prez, a darker-than-Nixon bad guy who frames his two predecessors in a scandal, and you have "a comedy-action thriller," says Segal, "that's also a buddy picture." Originally, it seems, different buddies—Robin Williams and Dustin Hoffman—were to star, with Frank Oz (*Housesitter*) and, later, Jim Abrahams (*Hot Shots!*) in line to direct. But Segal saw the Lemmon-Garner pairing as a natural—and apparently was right. "This was the easiest relationship I've had with an actor since Walter Matthau," says Lemmon. "From day one, we were on the same wavelength." (Dec. 20) <<BUZZ>> Cute concept,

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

>> Fellow Americans Lemmon and Garner; Evita's Madonna with Banderas



TNT presents the movie
that made an honest
cop an American hero
and Al Pacino a
Hollywood heavyweight.

AL PACINO SERPICO

SUNDAY



AUGUST 25, 10PM (ET)

THE NEW CLASSICS

FALL MOVIE PREVIEW

grand old actors...but will America have had enough presidential comedy by December?

DONNIE BRASCO

STARRING AL PACINO, JOHNNY DEPP, MICHAEL MADSEN, ANNE HECHÉ, BRUNO KIRBY, JAMES RUSSO DIRECTED BY MIKE NEWELL

AS MOB MOVIES GO, *Donnie Brasco* knows its turf. It's based on a book by FBI agent Joe Pistone (Depp), who in the late '70s successfully infiltrated the Bonanno crime family in New York City and was taken in by seasoned wiseguy Lefty Ruggiero (Pacino). But director Newell used some extraliterary methods to get his actors familiar with the Mafia. "One evening we all sat down and had dinner with—I'm forbidden to say exactly whom—some high-level mobsters," says Newell. "You'd think that Al, having played a mobster before, would have met one. But he never had. So he just wallowed in it. He had a great time at dinner." Newell promises this is a "worm's-eye view that you've never seen before—not the Mob yuppies of *GoodFellas* or the aristocracy of *The Godfather*. It's the two-bit kind of guys, the Willy Lomans." (Dec. 25) <<BUZZ>> Iffy, especially since Pacino's last '70s Mob movie, *Carlito's Way*, was an offer moviegoers could refuse.



CRIMES OF FASHION

Depp and Pacino leave it to leisure as *Donnie Brasco*'s G-man and Mafia hood

MICHAEL

STARRING JOHN TRAVOLTA, ANDIE MACDOWELL, WILLIAM HURT, ROBERT PASTORELLI, TERI GARR, JEAN STAPLETON DIRECTED BY NORA EPHRON

HE PLAYED A SINNER in *Pulp Fiction* and a saint in *Phenomenon*, but Travolta dabbles in both virtue and vice in *Michael*. Although his title character is one of heaven's archangels, Travolta's seraph happens to have an unholy appetite

Now it's down to the wire—and if the Oscar race looks confused to you, cheer up: It's no less bewildering to the studios releasing the movies. This December, Hollywood is hauling out films that sound like Academy Awards contenders in concept, if not necessarily in execution. Want an Oscar? Think Prestigious: Kenneth Branagh's full-dress, full-text version of *Hamlet* fits the bill, and it helps that the actor-director has been to the Oscars before, in both categories. Think Serious: Nicole Kidman, John Malkovich, and Barbara Hershey tackle *The Portrait of a Lady*, Jane Campion's first film since *The Piano*. Think Important: Rob Reiner's *Ghosts of Mississippi* dramatizes the decades-long effort to convict the killer of civil rights leader Medgar Evers. It has the potential for high-voltage performances from James Woods, Whoopi Goldberg, and Alec Baldwin, but it could be challenged by John Singleton's historical drama *Rosewood*, with Jon Voight and Ving Rhames. Think Sad (preferably Sad with an All-Star Cast): Meryl Streep, Diane Keaton, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Robert De Niro, who have been

nominated for 19 Oscars between them, star in the tearjerker *Marvin's Room*. Or just think Woody Allen, who has been nominated 19 times on his own and whose new movie, *Everyone Says I Love You*, might make the Academy say it too.



ROOM WITH A SKEW

After *Marvin's Room*, Streep and DiCaprio may light up on Oscar night



TNT presents the movie
that gave a whole new meaning to being Bad.

SHAFT

SATURDAY **TNT** AUGUST 31, 9PM (ET)

THE NEW CLASSICS



LADY AND THE SCAMP

>> Kidman's innocent American makes a match abroad with the devious Malkovich

for alcohol, women, and sugar. "I was free to do a lot of things, because who knows how an angel should behave?" says the actor, who took home a divine \$11 million for the role. "The way he drinks beer, the way he smokes, the way he womanizes. Nora allowed me to do some very bold things."

Celestial themes aside, *Michael* languished in development hell for years. Novelist Pete Dexter and partner Jim Quinlan—a journalist who had spent a year chasing tall tales for the *National Enquirer*—wrote a road movie about two tabloid hacks sent to Iowa to interview an angel. But in the rewrite by *Sleepless in Seattle*'s Ephron and her sister Delia, the angel acts as a cosmic Cupid for a reporter (Hurt) and an angel expert (MacDowell).

"We read their draft," says director Ephron, "and thought that it wanted to become a romantic comedy." (Dec. 25) <<BUZZ>> Travolta's fans remain hopelessly devoted to him, but *Michael* might be too much of a goody-goody thing after the supernatural sap-fest *Phenomenon*.

THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY

STARRING NICOLE KIDMAN, BARBARA HERSHEY, JOHN MALKOVICH, MARTIN DONOVAN DIRECTED

BY JANE CAMPION

YET ANOTHER DISINTERTERED author is about to make it big in Hollywood. But Henry James? He of the longest sentences this side of Sing Sing? "James is one of the most difficult writers to put on screen," concedes Kidman, who plays Isabel Archer, an American venturing to Europe in search of herself (and possibly a man). "But his perception is extraordinary." So was the chance to work with *The Piano*'s Campion, a fellow Aussie who cast Kidman in a student film 15 years ago. "I was 14," recalls the actress, "and I had to pull out because of my school exams. So to do this now is like going back to my roots, with all the Australians on the set." For the Americans, though, the atmosphere sometimes got a bit daggy (Aussie for uncool). "The day Jerry Garcia died, nobody knew who he was," sighs Donovan. "They all looked at me like, 'Huh?'" (Dec. 25) <<BUZZ>> Kidman and Campion—a combination that almost makes up for Paul Hogan.

A MAN. A FIGHTER. A CHAMPION.

MUHAMMAD ALI

THE WHOLE STORY



WORLD
PREMIERE

TNT
ORIGINAL

TUESDAY
SEPTEMBER 3
8PM (ET)

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DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JOSEPH CONSENTINO ASSOCIATE PRODUCER LONNIE REED TELESCRIPT BY LONNIE REED, JIM DONALDSON, MARK KING ASSOCIATE EDITOR PAUL CARRUTHERS
POST PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR STEPHEN CONSENTINO EXECUTIVE PRODUCER CARL H. LINDAHL PRODUCED BY JOSEPH CONSENTINO DIRECTED BY SANDRA & JOSEPH CONSENTINO

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CITIZEN RUTH

STARRING LAURA DERN, SWOOSIE KURTZ, KURTWOOD SMITH, MARY KAY PLACE, KELLY PRESTON, BURT REYNOLDS DIRECTED BY ALEXANDER PAYNE

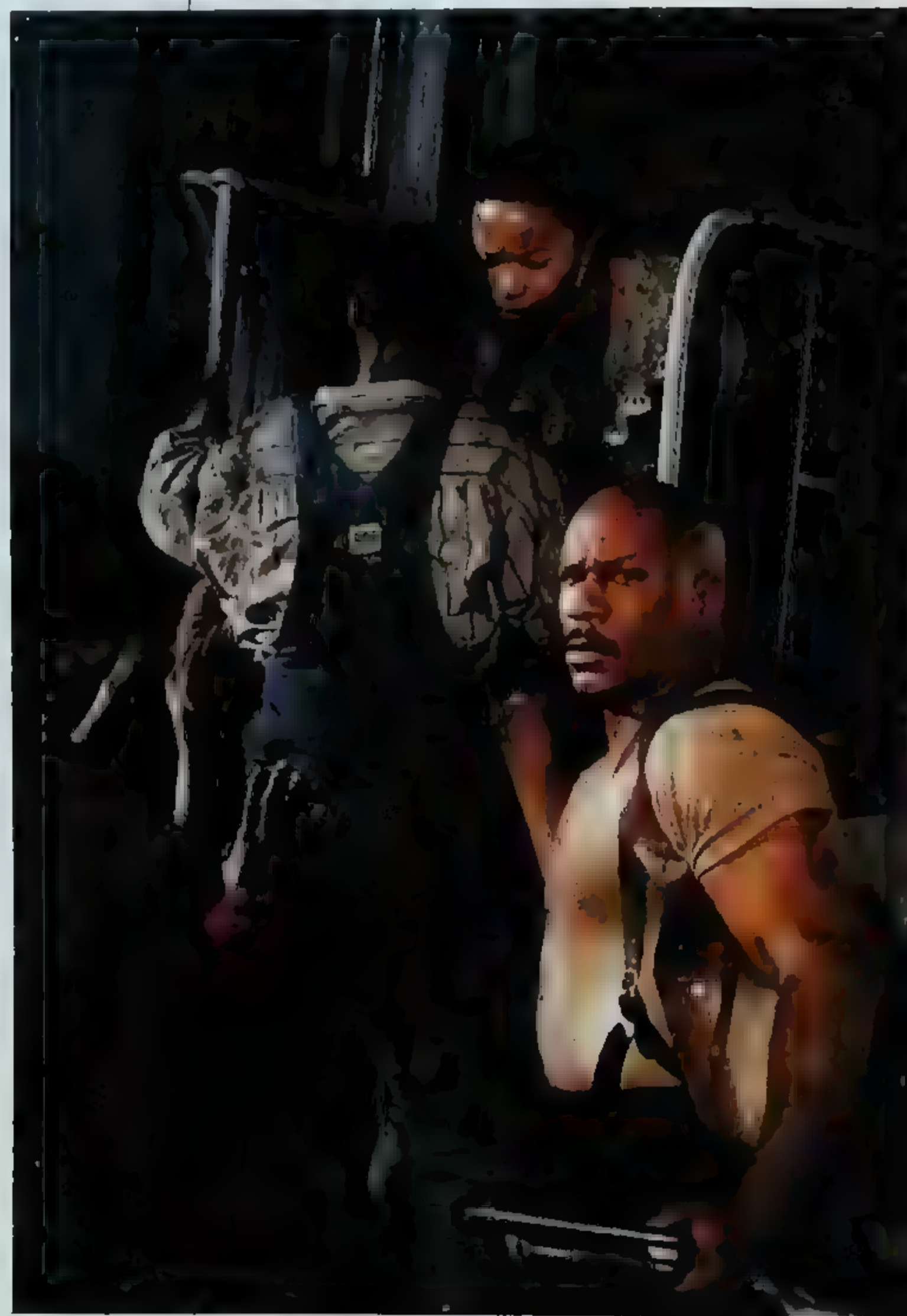
WHAT JUST CRACKS me up," says Dern, "is that somehow these guys made a movie that involves drugs and abortion and homelessness and despair in America...and it's hilarious." Not guffawing yet? Wait until you hear the premise. Dern plays the none-too-smart, none-too-nice, glue-sniffing, very pregnant pawn in a political tug-of-war between pro-life and pro-choice activists. The film was actually shot before life imitated satire and Norma McCorvey—the Jane Roe of Supreme Court history—

switched to the side of Operation Rescue. But how will it play when the spirit of Preston Sturges meets the age of Pat Buchanan? "I in no way made the film to provoke people," says director Payne, "but given the hypersensitivity these days, if it did not upset certain people, the film would've failed. It's hard not to piss people off." (Dec. 13) <<BUZZ>> Look for *Miramax*, which is sitting on the film until after the presidential election, to push Dern for an Oscar nomination.

ROSEWOOD

STARRING VING RHAMES, JON VOIGHT, DON CHEADLE, MICHAEL ROOKER DIRECTED BY JOHN SINGLETON

SINGLETON'S FOURTH film trades the hoods of South Central L.A. for the swamps of central Florida to tell the true story of an affluent African-American community that was nearly wiped out by a white mob in 1923. The saga remained nearly buried until 1994, when survivors won reparations from the Florida legislature. That's when producers Jon Peters and Tracy Barone bought the rights to their stories and hired Singleton to direct the \$25 million film, "the most challenging picture that I've ever done," Singleton says. He spent eight months in the South, building two towns in a snake-infested swamp, juggling 84 speaking parts, and coping with the pressure of filming a massacre: "I thought I would be desensitized to it, but that wasn't the case. This movie took a huge personal toll on me." (Dec. 20) <<BUZZ>> Rhames calls it Singleton's *Malcolm X*—and it could return the director to the acclaim he won for 1991's *Boyz n the Hood*.



RIGHTS AND WRONGS

Rhames plays defense in *Rosewood*; Citizen's Dern and Kurtz court history



TURBULENCE

STARRING RAY LIOTTA, LAUREN HOLLY, HECTOR ELIZONDO DIRECTED BY ROBERT BUTLER

FASTEN YOUR seat belts—it's going to be a bumpy movie. This thriller about a serial killer and a plucky flight attendant duking it out in a 747 at 35,000 feet was shot on five huge gimbals, mechanisms that mimic the effects of a storm. "I don't like flying to begin with, and this felt like the real thing," says Liotta. "It was like a theme ride," says director Butler, who thinks the physically demanding shoot may have helped distract Holly from her then-rocky relationship with Jim Carrey. "She was a little preoccupied," Butler admits. "But she seemed to forget everything else while she was on camera." There's a happy ending—at least off screen: Holly and Carrey are now engaged. (Dec. 20) <<BUZZ>> Disaster movies are resurgent, but this one faces serious marketing hurdles; MGM pulled its trailers after the TWA crash.

SOME MOTHER'S SON

STARRING HELEN MIRREN, FIONNULA FLANAGAN, AIDAN GILLEN, DAVID O'HARA, JOHN LYNCH DIRECTED BY TERRY GEORGE

NORTHERN IRELAND'S turmoil doesn't lend itself to easy answers—or simple scripts. "There's no way you could Hollywoodize this story," George admits. Which is why the first-time director stripped the Troubles down to a heartbreaking choice: Two women (Mirren and Flanagan) must decide whether to sign a form that will save their sons from starving themselves to death during the 1981 hunger strike. "Here was an opportunity to show what some of that pain and anguish was like," says Flanagan, who prepped by spending hours with a woman who'd lost three sons to the conflict. For the film's recreation of Bobby Sands' funeral procession through Belfast's streets, thousands of extras waited patiently on a freezing morning in Cork, even when the hearse broke down. "A lot of people who wished they'd been to the funeral used it as an opportunity to re-participate," George says. "It took on its own life." <<BUZZ>> Flanagan's performance could generate Oscar talk—if enough people see the film.

The Fall Movie Preview was edited by Mark Harris and written by Rebecca Ascher-Walsh, Kristen Baldwin, Jess Cagle, Steve Daly, Mitch Frank, Jeff Gordinier, Marion Hart, A.J. Jacobs, Dave Karger, Dana Kennedy, Gregg Kilday, Kate Meyers, Chris Nashawaty, Degen Peneer, Jessica Shaw, Benjamin Svetkey, Caren Weiner, and Chris Willman.

ALSO IN

DECEMBER

SCREAM

What better name for a Wes Craven flick? Formerly called *Scary Movie*, this Christmas Day stocking stuffer follows high schoolers Drew Barrymore and Neve Campbell (*Party of Five*), who are being stalked by a sociopath. (Courteney Cox plays a reporter.) "The movie is very self-referential," says Craven, "because not only is it scary, it's about kids who like scary movies." (Dec. 25)

THE SUBSTANCE OF FIRE

Playwright Jon Robin Baltz's portrait of a family and a publishing house that collapse when the patriarch (Ron Rifkin) clashes with his kids was an Off Broadway smash in 1991. For the film (also starring Tony Goldwyn, Timothy Hutton, and Sarah Jessica Parker), Baltz and director Daniel Sullivan raised the stakes: "The consequences that were emotional in the play," says Sullivan, "are now mortal." (Dec. 6)

THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD

"How we got a film with no sex or violence made is a f---in' miracle," says director Dan Ireland. His adaptation of Novalyne Price Ellis' memoir about her relationship with suicidal pulp fiction writer Robert E. Howard (*Conan the Barbarian*) can claim other miracles: It cost just \$1.3 million, was shot in 24 days, and snagged Tom Cruise's next leading lady (*Jerry Maguire*'s Renee Zellweger) when pregnant costar Olivia d'Abo had to be replaced. (Dec. 25)



SCREAM TEAM

Campbell, Cox chill out

THE PEST

Nobody said comedy was easy—especially not John Leguizamo, the coproducer-star of this antic goof about a scam artist stalked by a hunter (Jeffrey Jones). Leguizamo got a snakebite and a chipped clavicle—but the schedule (32 days) and budget (\$8 million) meant the show had to go on: "They'd massage me and throw me back in the ring."



Stalk on the Wild Side

As a desperate salesman terrorizing baseball star Wesley Snipes in 'The Fan,' Robert De Niro adds another to his gallery of memorably crazed misfits. BY OWEN GLEIBERMAN

ROBERT DE NIRO has spent so much of his career playing cold-eyed psychotic freaks that you'd think by now he'd have run out of variations. He hasn't, of course. In **THE FAN** (TriStar, R), a stalker thriller that's the latest piece of De Niro psycho-delia, he has such a fierce and confident presence that he can afford to portray yet another walking time bomb without resorting to gimmicks or frills. De Niro's Gil Renard, a beaten-down San Francisco salesman, is, at first glance, the soul of middle-aged

weariness. Jowly, with graying short hair and a gaze of incipient defeat, he might be Willy Loman's updated cousin. Except that this is a Willy Loman whose desperation has fermented into paranoia. Gil sells knives for a living—big ones, small ones, all sharp enough to razor through the hair on your arm. Yes, folks, someone has finally made a movie about...a door-to-door knife salesman! As soon as we see Gil fondling those gleaming silver weapons, each photographed in eroticized close-up, we know *The Fan* is going to be a kind of ominous joke, a countdown to the moment when Gil stops selling his knives and starts using them.

With his repertoire of leers, frowns, and profane sociopathic taunts, Robert De Niro has become modern screen acting's most gloriously perverse showman. His control-freak hooligans are wired so tight with rage that they're about to blow. Yet the sicker they are, the more fun De Niro has playing them, and we share, conspiratorially, in his theatrical relish. Here, as in *The Untouchables* or *Cape Fear*, De Niro's performance is a delirious Method turn, a master thespian's version of a punk exorcism. We keep

RAINING ON HIS PARADE: De Niro (right) forces Snipes into the most dangerous game of his life

watching, all right, because we want to see how far he'll go this time.

Gil fancies himself a perfectionist, but he falls behind in everything he does. He can't meet the sales levels set by his boss; his palsy-walsy pitch talk is pathetically out of touch in an era of sleek corporate misanthropy. He's also divorced, with an ex-wife (Patti D'Arbanville-Quinn) who despises him and a son (Andrew J. Ferchland) he can barely relate to. There's only one thing that gets Gil's juices flowing: baseball. His beloved San Francisco Giants are about to kick off the new season, and they've just spent \$40 million to acquire a weapon of their own: Bobby Rayburn (Wesley Snipes), a hot new slugger with an earring, an agent (John Leguizamo), and an attitude of brazen contempt for anything that doesn't advance his personal franchise.

From the razzle-dazzle opening scene, in which Gil talks to Bobby the hipster jock over a sports talk-radio line as the two barrel through the city in their separate vehicles, it's clear that director Tony Scott (*Crimson Tide*) is back to his old tricks—smashing a sequence into spangly “visual” fragments, fetishizing everything in the manner of a Nike commercial. Yet there's no denying that Scott is a wizard of the narcotic-flash school. In *The Fan*, he uses his chromium-edged technique to evoke a dread-saturated consumerist America in which the most beloved institutions have grown mercenary and hard. When Gil, after scrounging scalpers' tickets for \$200, brings his kid to opening day, Scott stages it as a nightmarishly funny parody of a father-son outing, with the game taking on overtones of a fascist rally. Gil's baseball “banter” is torturously self-involved—the only way he can communicate with his son is by lecturing—and his anger keeps bursting through the surface. No actor turns profanity into comic poetry the way De Niro does. When Gil swears, it's so venomous, so obscenely inappropriate, that each four-letter word is like a twinkle of derangement.

De Niro's performance is scary, funny, even touching. The moment Gil breaks from reality, though, the movie, in slavish imitation of *Fatal Attraction*, does too. Reeling from his own failure, Gil becomes obsessed with Bobby the baseball star. He spies on Bobby, kills for him,

kidnaps his son, punishes him for “betraying” the game. Snipes' Bobby is a hotshot slickster who grows more likable as he's humbled—first by a batting slump, then by Gil's terror tactics. Yet the all-too-real phenomenon of stalking gets treated with hazy, synthetic, it's-only-a-movie psychology. The more *The Fan* turns into a thriller, the less it thrills. The climactic night game, staged in a downpour, generates everything but suspense—it's so drawn out you may start wishing they'd call the game. Still, when Gil hits Bobby with his ultimate taunt (“Now do you care?”), it's a chilling echo of the movie Scott got at least halfway on screen, a thriller about an era in which fans idolize their heroes right out of reach. **B**

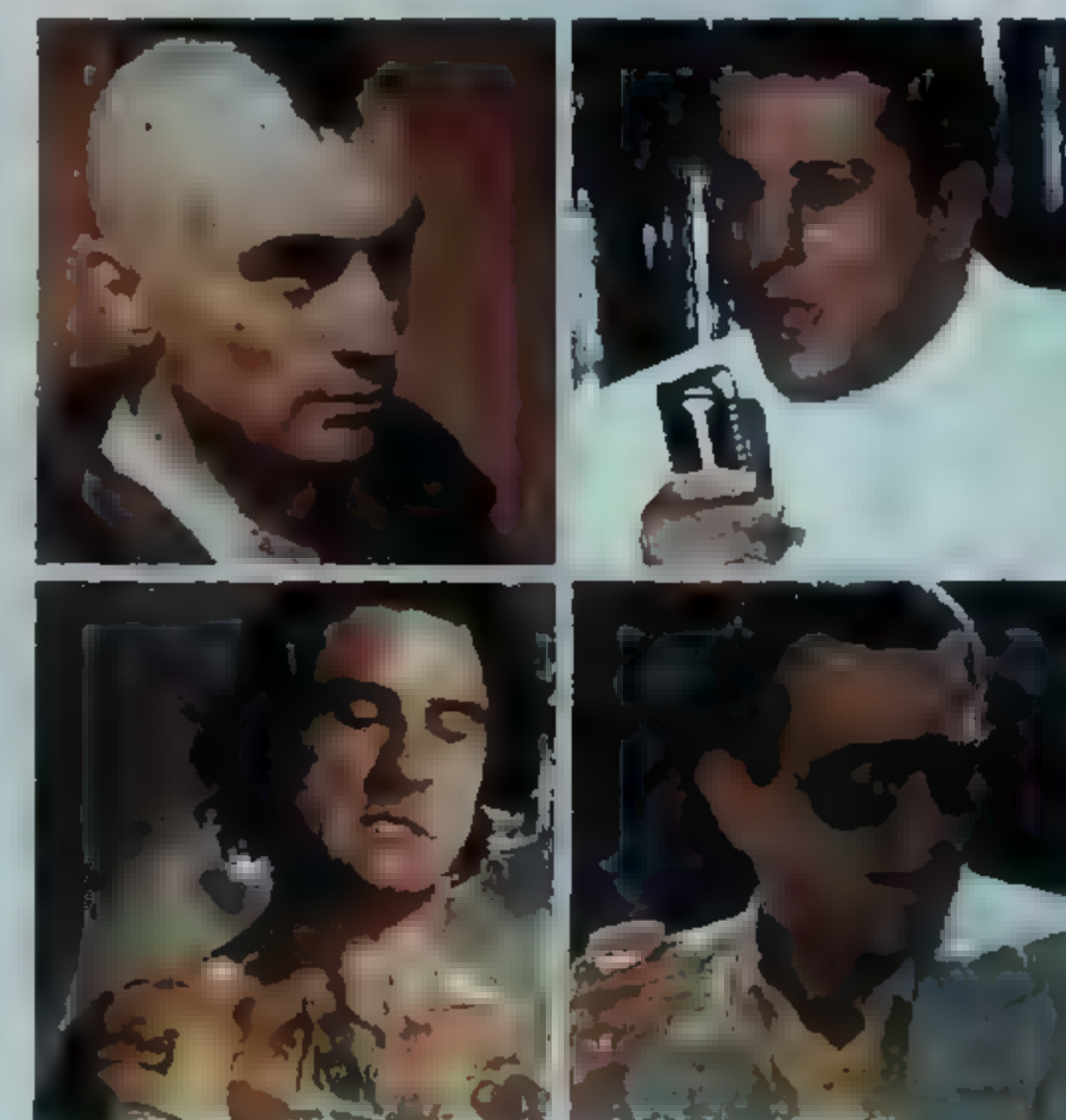
DE NIRO GETS FANATICALLY IN CHARACTER

MISTER KNOW-IT-ALL

“I WANNA KNOW what you know.” So said Robert De Niro upon meeting Gavin de Becker, high-profile expert on violent stalkers, psychotic snipers, and every other kind of fixation-prone criminal. As de Becker discovered, De Niro meant his pronouncement literally. The actor was so intent on making the celebrity terrorist he plays in *The Fan* accurate, he out-obsessed the obsessives he studied.

De Becker's 46-member L.A. firm, Gavin de Becker, Inc., maintains a vast storehouse culled from thousands of police cases involving the behavioral aberrations of such folks as Robert Bardo (who murdered actress Rebecca Schaeffer) to Tina Marie Ledbetter (she showered Michael J. Fox with 6,000 written death threats). De Niro read case files. He watched taped interrogations. He met with knife salesmen, since that's what his character hawks. He mastered complex databases used to predict violent behavior. “By the time he finished,” says de Becker, “he was competent to come to work for me.” And what insights did Bobby glean? “He grasped that stalkers aren't starstruck or shy, they're grandiose. They feel they deserve fame.”

Of course, such pregame prep isn't unusual for De Niro. “He's a brilliant reporter,” says author Nicholas Pileggi, who watched the actor soak up Mob culture—and couture—while working together on *GoodFellas* and *Casino*. De Niro's most flabbergasting fact-finding foray? Shopping for 24 silk shirts with real-life capo Frank Rosenthal. When this performer plays ball, you'd better believe he gets the uniform down—right to the last button. —Steve Daly



CLASSIC OVER-STUDY: De Niro in (from top left) *Taxi Driver*, *Raging Bull*, *Casino*, and *Cape Fear*

almost—gets the whole joint to dance.

The elegantly constructed plot mixes real and fictional characters, and centers on the woes of hard-bitten, movie-mad Blondie O'Hara (Jennifer Jason Leigh), whose dumb-thug husband, Johnny (Dermot Mulroney), is being held by vicious, jazz-loving Mob king Seldom Seen (Harry Belafonte, in a rewardingly strong performance—see page 104). Blondie, in turn, kidnaps a politico's laudanum-addicted wife (Miranda Richardson), hoping to effect a swap. As the two women roam the city overnight, the contours of their stunted lives emerge while jazz wails.

So much is satisfying in *KC* that its shortcomings are all the more discordant. The music, meant to re-create a famous all-night showdown between jazz legends Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young, has rightly been turned over to a great crop of contemporary young musicians, among them Craig Handy (Hawkins) and Joshua Redman (Young). Richardson is luminous and wrenching as a woman who, even in a drug haze, knows the score. Cinematographer Oliver Stapleton gives the town a lush, late-night palette the color of Vamp nail polish.

But oh, oh, oh—when that Miss Leigh gets an Acting Idea in mind, she clings to it like a terrier chomping a gym sock. So fierce and mannered is she here that any natural emotional response we might have to the sadness she means to reveal is thwarted by our attention to

her thespian exploits. While he gets others to swing, Altman lets Leigh go by the metronome. So she don't mean a thing. **B-** —Lisa Schwarzbaum

Time Bandit

Kurt Russell's future isn't what it used to be in *'Escape'*

MAD MAX and the *Planet of the Apes* sequels may have paved the way for it, but John Carpenter's *Escape From New York* (1981) was the first movie to look at the not-too-distant future of American life and see a junk pile, an ur-

ban dream falling apart. Even the hero was falling apart: Kurt Russell's Snake Plissken wore an eye patch and a burnout scowl. The film was too crudely made to qualify as a "vision" (that would come later, with *Blade Runner* and *RoboCop*), but what kept you watching was the novelty of the premise—Manhattan as an entropic sci-fi comic-book hell.

By now, that decaying-future image pops up once a month or so (most recent version: *Barb Wire*). Carpenter, though, hasn't lost his sense of timing. **JOHN CARPENTER'S ESCAPE FROM L.A.** (Paramount, R) comes along at the perfect moment to honor the passing of the torch from New York to Los Angeles as America's official Capital of the Apocalypse.

Once again, Snake has to enter a sprawling urban prison zone and, with a deadly virus implanted in his blood, carry out a suicide mission. I have no idea why Russell is doing a brazen Clint Eastwood impersonation, but I do know that no one who looks this good need croak out his lines in this steely a whisper. Carpenter's L.A. suggests a Bosnian refugee camp outfitted by Frederick's of Hollywood. Every so often, we get to feast our eyes upon a trashed landmark—cheesy B-movie mock-ups of the Capitol Records tower and the Beverly Hills Hotel lying in ruins. Carpenter never was the filmmaker his cult claimed him to be, but in *Escape From L.A.*, he at least has the instinct to keep his hero moving, like some leather-biker Candide. Among Snake's more amusing pit stops: a gladiatorial basketball game in the L.A. Coliseum and a cosmetics emporium run by the "Surgeon General of Beverly Hills." **C+** —OG



CRITICAL MASS

Here's how a sampling of critics and movie audiences from across the country grade 10 current releases.

	CINEMASCOPE Audience scores for U.S.	ROGER EBERT Star & Bart	GENE SISKEL Star & Bart	JAMI BERNARD Knight, Robert Siskel	STEVEN REA Knight, John Siskel	MIKE CLARK Knight, John Siskel	ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY	AVERAGE*
BASQUIAT (Miramax)	—	A-	A	—	C+	B-	B+	B+
EMMA (Miramax)	—	B	A	A-	B-	A	B	B+
ESCAPE FROM L.A. (Paramount)	B-	B+	C	B	—	C+	C+	B-
THE FAN (TriStar)	—	—	—	C	—	—	B	B-
HOUSE ARREST (MGM)	—	D	F	C	C-	B	D-	D+
JACK (Hollywood)	B+	C-	D	—	C+	D	C	C-
MATILDA (TriStar)	B+	B	C+	C	B-	C+	B	B-
THE SPITFIRE GRILL (Castle Rock)	—	D	D	—	—	C+	C+	C-
A TIME TO KILL (Warner Bros.)	A	B	C	B	C	D+	C	C+
TIN CUP (Warner Bros.)	—	B	A-	C	C+	—	A-	B

* Average does not include Cinemascope

MOM WAS RIGHT.



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KANSAS CITY CHIEF HARRY BELAFONTE

GOOD GUY MAKES BAD

The charitable crooner guns for a whole new Hollywood image. BY CHRIS WILLMAN

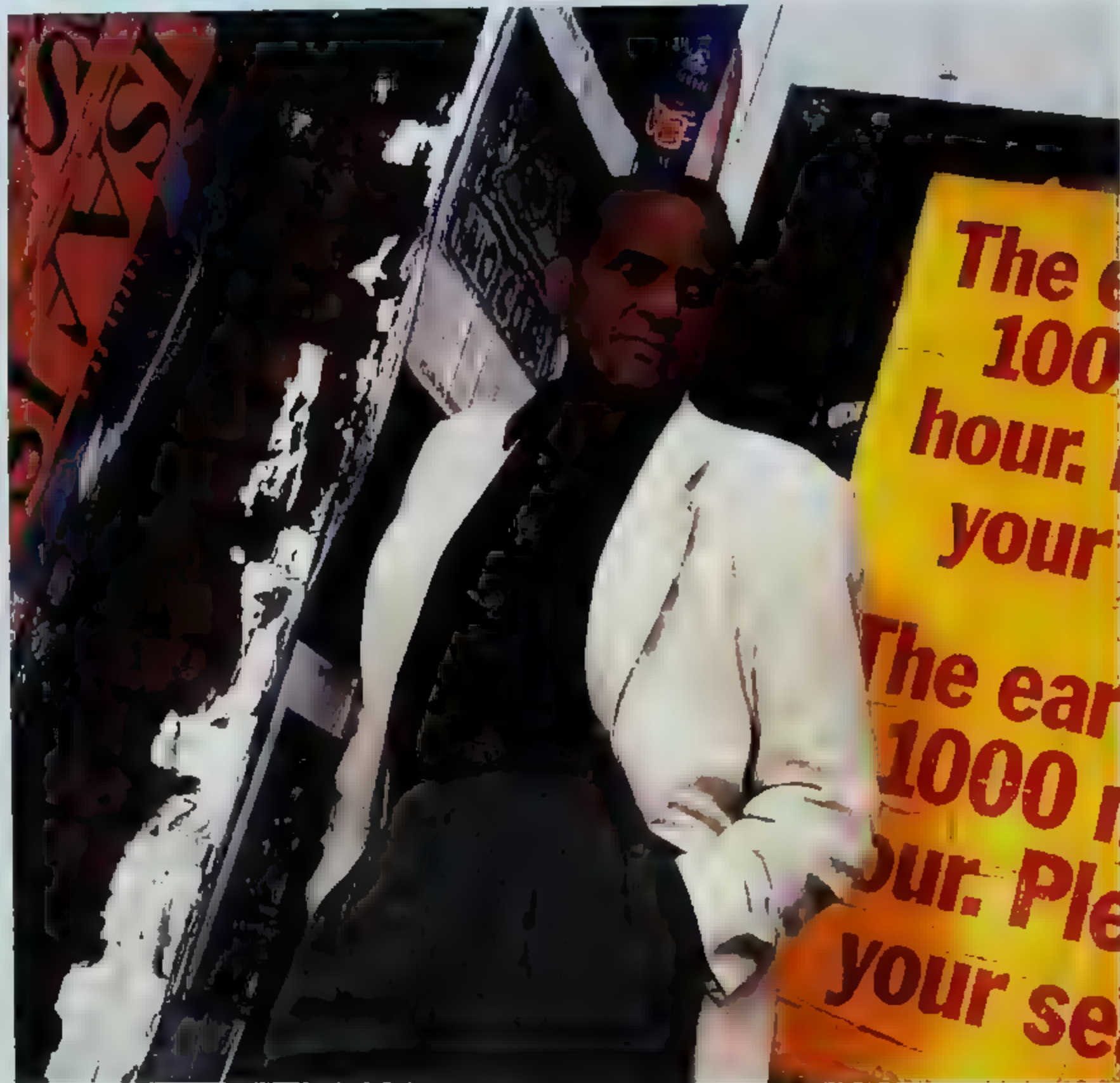
NOT SURPRISINGLY, Harry Belafonte has a beef with contemporary black movies. "We've developed a whole culture of caricatures," gripes the African-American actor, who helped put the color in Technicolor in the '50s and '60s. "We behave as we think they want to see us. I know a lot of guys in the hood who don't dress with Nikes and dreads and baggy clothes—but you never see that."

So what sort of alternative archetype is the activist and humanitarian offering now that he's back on screen after a two-decade layoff? Well, a gangsta.

Make that *gangster*. As Seldom Seen, the '30s Mob boss in Robert Altman's jazz-age melodrama, *Kansas City*, Belafonte adopts a mustache, a fake bald spot, a *Godfatheresque* slur, and the blood drive to rip the innards out of double-crossers. His character may be smooth, but his depravity requires some suspension of disbelief for the millions who know Belafonte as America's "Day-O"-singing diplomat to the world.

Tell him about it. "I didn't start off working on this film with any intentions of being in it," he protests. "Altman and I struck up a relationship pretty late in both of our lives"—beginning when the auteur, now 71, asked Belafonte, now 69, to make a cameo in 1992's *The Player*, and continuing when the two found they lived only a few blocks apart in Manhattan. The new buddies brainstormed over a script about Amos 'n' Andy (as yet unproduced), then moved on to develop *Kansas City's* Seldom Seen. Certain character flourishes were inspired by some family "numbers guys" Belafonte knew as a youngster in Harlem. "One day [Altman] popped the question to me: 'Why don't you play it?' I laughed and said: 'It's ridiculous! It's so outside my persona.' And then after a couple more drinks, he said: 'Can I ask you something, Belafonte? Who started this rumor that you were an actor?'"

Ouch. Actually, though, KC marks the UNICEF goodwill ambassador's second consecutive heavy. He returned last year after a 21-year gap between screen leads as a bigot in the little-seen role-reversal parable *White Man's Bur-*



ALWAYS IN THE VANGUARD: Belafonte outside the historic jazz club where he began his career

den. Coaching him daily through his "rustiness" for both movies was his actress daughter Gina (who has a cameo in *Kansas City*), one of two children from his 39-year marriage to Julie, a former dancer (actress Shari Belafonte is one of two more from a previous union).

Unworried about how his big-screen turpitude will affect UNICEF donations, Belafonte has assured his nervous agent that he's all right with playing guys who are all wrong, so long as the picture itself doesn't celebrate evil. Corrupt as he is in *Kansas City*, Belafonte finds affirmation in how Altman weaves ethnicity "around a set of events that has all these people touching each other's lives."

Meanwhile, Belafonte has been long resigned to not touching many studio executives' lives. "I don't have many friends in Hollywood, because I walk in and they say, 'Here comes Mr. Conscience.' And they dismiss you with the word *liberal* or *do-good*...all the things we should most want to be. To be a 'liberal' today is worse than being a Communist 20 years ago." Come to think of it, maybe Belafonte is used to playing the villain. ♦

PHOTOGRAPH BY LINDA COVELLO

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Pictured from top left: Bonda Grayson in *Nancy Drew And The Hidden Staircase* (1939); Peter Sellers in *The Pink Panther* (1964); Myrna Loy, William Powell in *After The Thin Man* (1936); Robert Stevens in *The Private Life Of Sherlock Holmes* (1970); Margaret Rutherford in *Murder Alley* (1936); Sidney Toler in *The Jade Mask* (1945); Humphrey Bogart in *The Maltese Falcon* (1942).

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THE WEEK

Reviews by OWEN GLEIBERMAN, LISA SCHWARZBAUM, and KEN TUCKER

NEW RELEASES

THE SPITFIRE GRILL (Castle Rock, PG-13) If you've been searching for the sort of movie experience that makes Frank Capra look like a serial killer, this morning-in-America weeper should do the trick. Percy (Alison Elliott), a milky-skinned waif, emerges from a five-year sentence for manslaughter and arrives in the small town of Gilead, Maine, where she goes to work for Hannah (Ellen Burstyn), the ailing proprietor of the Spitfire Grill. The moment you see Ellen Burstyn peering over her granny glasses, rasping out orders in the sort of down-from-the-Mayflower accent generally reserved for local productions of *Our Town*, you know she's half an hour away from melting into an old softy. But then, Percy seems to have this effect on everybody. She's so life-affirming, so good, she's a regular angel; her story has been engineered to bring a lump to the throat of everyone from Andrea Dworkin to Ralph Reed. Elliott, a gifted actress, has a doleful sensuality that holds the picture together (at least, when it's not collapsing into absurd episodes about Burstyn's phantom-of-the-woods visitant), and the notion of raffling off the Spitfire Grill with an essay contest has a musty,



STANDARD FARE: From left, Elliott, Marcia Gay Harden, and Burstyn cook up bland sentiment in *Spitfire Grill*

Old Hollywood charm. Still, you'd have to be awfully desperate for cheap tears to fall for this piece of sentimental Prozac. **C+** —OG

IN THEATERS

BASQUIAT (R) A teasingly unresolved docudrama about Jean-Michel Basquiat, the rock star of the '80s art scene. In the title role, Jeffrey Wright is spacey in a seductive, monosyllabic way, as if he were swimming around in feelings he didn't have the words for. The scenes of Basquiat's rise are juicy inside glimpses of the '80s art scene, with David Bowie ripely overplaying Andy Warhol's drop-dead murmurings. By the end, though, we realize director Julian Schnabel has reconfigured Basquiat as a kind of ghostly myth, and that we've never completely seen the man behind it. **B+** (#340, Aug. 16) —OG

EMMA (PG) Jane Austen cooked up a full-banquet romantic comedy; writer-director Douglas McGrath offers a light, sunny, American-style tea party. Gwyneth Paltrow's mix of country freshness and city-chick sophistication is used to good advantage in the title role, that of a heroine clever enough to strategize about the matrimonial welfare of others while blind to her own happiness. **B** (#339, Aug. 9) —LS

HOUSE ARREST (PG) A deeply tacky, psychobabbling comedy about a couple of kids who lock their parents (Jamie Lee Curtis and Kevin Pollak) in the basement, hoping the adults will patch up their differences before they call the lawyers. The film is too negligible to waste time talking about what a disservice it does to real issues of divorce. But in its blinkered way, it's an insidious piece of late-summer cultural junk. **D-** (#340, Aug. 16) —LS

INDEPENDENCE DAY (PG-13) This big-ass sci-fi thriller about aliens who invade Earth is witty, of-the-moment fun. **B+** (#335, July 12) —LS

JACK (PG-13) Francis Ford Coppola directed this syrupy comedy starring Robin Williams as a 10-year-old boy in a man's body. Arriving in the fifth grade, Jack has to scrunch his body into a small desk, and the other kids brand him a freak. Before long, though, he wins them over. Williams acts silly and goo-goo-eyed, and he seems to collapse into tears every 20 minutes. It's hard to shake the feeling that Coppola has become a hack in an artist's body. **C** (#339, Aug. 9) —OG

MATILDA (PG) A high-spirited adaptation of Roald Dahl's classic about a very smart little girl (Mara Wilson) and her triumph over dimbulb parents (director Danny DeVito and wife Rhea Perlman) and

WINNER
OF THE WEEK

General Mills



In *The Frighteners*, Michael J. Fox eats Boo Berry cereal while chatting up poltergeists. And in Ron Howard's upcoming *Ransom*, Donnie Wahlberg shops for Franken Berry. Can Count Chocula be far behind—say, in *Cereal Thrillers*?

a monstrous school principal (Pam Ferris). The bond Matilda establishes with her fragile teacher (Embeth Davidtz) is so strong.

though, that when the film resorts to gimmickry, it feels like a cop-out: *Carrie* for the Hello Kitty crowd. **B** (#339, Aug. 9) —Ty Burr

A TIME TO KILL (R) A black father (Samuel L. Jackson) kills the two white men who raped his 10-year-old daughter and is defended by a fervent white lawyer (Matthew McConaughey), who faces down the entire history of Southern racism. Director Joel Schumacher favors a sensual, time-warped production in which it's forever the 1960s in Mississippi. **B** (#338, Aug. 2) —LS

TIN CUP (R) It has a genial, funky charm. Set in the world of professional golf, Ron Shelton's romantic comedy gives Kevin Costner the kind of role that reminds you what a charismatic sly-dog actor he is. Costner's Roy McAvoy is a golf wizard who didn't have the discipline to make it as a pro. He's a man who won't be tamed, and Costner, who's like Gary Cooper gone to seed, gets us to respond to Roy's ornery grace, the side of him that loves the game so much he's willing to lose. Don Johnson is Roy's smooth-as-silk rival, and Rene Russo is the sharp-tongued psychologist who jump-starts his ambition. The biggest surprise of *Tin Cup* is that, after lulling us with its dreamy golf-and-romance rhythms, it turns out to be a thrilling sports movie. **A-** (#340, Aug. 16) —OG

REALITY CHECK

THE TRUCK STOPS HERE

IN THIS summer of big bad F/X extravaganzas, how on earth could *Chain Reaction* top *Twister*'s computer-generated flying 18-wheeler? With the genuine article, naturally. For a scene in



REACTION SHOT: Real thing or semi?

which a hydrogen explosion blasts a tanker past Keanu Reeves, filmmakers used air cannons to fire an actual truck past a stunt motorecyclist. "We took all the weight we could off the truck," recalls stunt coordinator Walter Scott. "We took the engine out. We even made tires out of foam rubber." There was, however, some postproduction digital nagging. (Fear not, Keanu lovers: The close-up of the tanker flying over his head was entirely computer-generated.) The finished scene is a smooth amalgam of actuality and technology. "I'm not even sure what was computer and what was for real," Scott admits. "It all looks so damn good." —Dave Karger

BOX OFFICE

'JACK' AT THE BOX

ROBIN WILLIAMS, who has built up his kiddie credentials with *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *Aladdin*, and *Jumanji*, scored another No. 1 opening with his latest, *Jack*. Released under Disney's Hollywood Pictures label, the fuzzy comedy nudged *A Time to Kill* (in its third weekend) out of the top spot. *Jack*, bucking generally dismissive reviews, isn't likely to prove a long-running hit like Williams' *The Birdcage*, which opened to \$18.3 million, or his *Doubtfire*, which stunned with \$20.5 million. But its opening numbers mirrored those of *Jumanji*, which did go on to earn \$100 million.



HEAD OF THE CLASS: Williams' fifth-grade Jack is a perfect 10

WEEKEND TOP 20

WEEKEND GROSS*	WEEKEND PER-SCREEN AVERAGE*	MOVIE	WEEKS IN RELEASE	GROSS TO DATE
\$11.2	\$11.2	JACK Hollywood, Robin Williams	1	\$11.2
\$10.8	\$59.2	A TIME TO KILL Warner Bros., Samuel L. Jackson	3	\$59.2
\$8.9	\$8.9	JOHN CARPENTER'S ESCAPE FROM L.A. Paramount, Kurt Russell	1	\$8.9
\$8.7	\$256.8	INDEPENDENCE DAY 20th Century Fox, Will Smith	6	\$256.8
\$5.0	\$18.9	MATILDA TriStar, Mara Wilson	2	\$18.9
\$4.0	\$88.2	PHENOMENON Touchstone, John Travolta	6	\$88.2
\$3.7	\$14.9	CHAIN REACTION 20th Century Fox, Keanu Reeves	2	\$14.9
\$3.3	\$48.2	COURAGE UNDER FIRE 20th Century Fox, Denzel Washington	5	\$48.2
\$2.9	\$116.0	THE NUTTY PROFESSOR Universal, Eddie Murphy	7	\$116.0
\$2.9	\$19.3	KNOX MGM, Woody Harrelson	3	\$19.3
\$1.6	\$233.7	TWISTER Warner Bros., Bill Paxton	14	\$233.7
\$1.4	\$1.8	EMMA Miramax, Gwyneth Paltrow	2	\$1.8
\$1.3	\$5.5	TRAINSPOTTING Miramax, Ewan McGregor	4	\$5.5
\$1.1	\$12.7	SUPERCOP Dimension, Jackie Chan	3	\$12.7
\$0.9	\$15.8	FLED MGM, Laurence Fishburne	4	\$15.8
\$0.9	\$93.3	THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME Walt Disney, Animated	8	\$93.3
\$0.8	\$10.2	THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO New Line, Martin Landau	3	\$10.2
\$0.8	\$128.0	THE ROCK Hollywood, Nicolas Cage	10	\$128.0
\$0.8	\$19.5	MULTIPLICITY Columbia, Michael Keaton	4	\$19.5
\$0.6	\$94.6	ERASER Warner Bros., Arnold Schwarzenegger	8	\$94.6

WEEKEND PER-SCREEN AVERAGE*

TOP 10 / PER SCREEN

WEEKEND GROSS*	MOVIE	WEEKS IN RELEASE
\$13,373	EMMA Miramax	106
\$6,545	JACK Hollywood	1,710
\$4,650	A TIME TO KILL Warner Bros.	2,313
\$3,855	JOHN CARPENTER'S ESCAPE FROM L.A. Paramount	2,312
\$3,721	TRAINSPOTTING Miramax	357
\$3,353	INDEPENDENCE DAY 20th Century Fox	2,589
\$2,500	MATILDA TriStar	2,006
\$1,964	COURAGE UNDER FIRE 20th Century Fox	1,846
\$1,921	PHENOMENON Touchstone	2,086
\$1,658	TWISTER Warner Bros.	949

SOURCE: EXHIBITOR RELATIONS CO. INC.
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What're the Odds...

...that such popular sitcoms as 'Seinfeld' and 'Frasier' will still smell as sweet 25 years from now? Pretty good—if they learn from the fresh-as-a-daisy 'Odd Couple.' BY BRUCE FRETTS

THIS SUMMER'S real Must See TV isn't on NBC. It's Nick at Nite's blocks of **THE ODD COUPLE** (Thursdays, 8–11 p.m.), the 1970–75 ABC sitcom that starred Jack Klugman as slovenly sportswriter Oscar Madison and Tony Randall as anal-retentive photographer Felix Unger, the original Single Guys in the City. The show hasn't just held up well: It actually plays better than it did 25 years ago. And it was damn good then.

How can this be? By looking at the reasons why the show has aged more like one of Felix's fine wines than like one of Oscar's submarine sandwiches, we can answer this question—and predict how we think a handful of current sitcoms will play 25 years from now.

1. The Odd Couple was consistent. Never has this been more evident than in Nick at Nite's "block party" lineup. Watching six episodes back-to-back, you'd expect to find a bad *Couple* in the bunch, but they're as rare as good jokes on *Coach*. (I defy anyone, on the other hand, to sit through all six *Munsters* Nick airs on Mondays.) Even compared to such a durable and groundbreaking show as **SEINFELD** (NBC, Thursdays, 9–9:30 p.m.), *The Odd Couple's* track record is unsurpassed. God help you, however, should you stumble across a *Seinfeld* from the Great Slump of 1995. Sure, the show has since bounced back creatively, but it's still capable of turning out clinkers (witness last season's ghastly finale).

2. The Odd Couple wasn't topical. Aside from atrocious fashions and occasional Me Decade guest stars (e.g., Bobby Riggs), you'd never know *The Odd Couple* was made in the '70s. Its humor is timeless—which is more than can be said for **MURPHY BROWN** (CBS, Mondays, 9–9:30 p.m.). Those Dan Quayle jokes haven't aged



well, and unlike Candice Bergen's marital misfit, Felix and Oscar never had to lecture anyone on "family values."

3. The Odd Couple had a conflict. The opening puts it succinctly: "Can two divorced men share an apartment without driving each other crazy?" The tension between the beer-swilling Oscar and the Bordeaux-sipping Felix provided an inexhaustible wellspring of comedy. Similarly, **FRASIER** (NBC, Tuesdays, 9–9:30 p.m.) sets up a snob-versus-slob battle, as Frasier Crane (Kelsey Grammer) and his even fussier brother, Niles (David Hyde Pierce), butt heads with their blue-collar dad (John Mahoney). If *Cheers* is *Frasier's* sitcom father, *The Odd Couple* is a not-too-distant cousin. Grammer and Pierce's impeccable diction and Mahoney's guttural grunts contain unmistakable echoes of Randall and Klugman.

4. The Odd Couple's cast was free of dead wood. Randall and Klugman were the only regulars the show required; they came to embody Felix and Oscar (an amazing feat, since they had already been embodied by Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau). When other characters were needed—say, Murray the cop (a pre-*Happy Days* Al Molinaro) or Oscar's secretary, Myrna (a pre-*Laverne & Shirley* Penny Marshall)—they were brought in. But the writers didn't have to include these characters every week. **FRIENDS** (NBC, Thursdays, 8–8:30 p.m.), however, has to dole out its gags among six regulars, some (Matthew Perry, Jennifer Aniston) more gifted than others (Matt LeBlanc, Courteney Cox). And *The Odd Couple's* guest stars were never as gratuitous—or as unamusing—as Tom Selleck or Jean-Claude Van Damme.

5. The Odd Couple never tried to deliver anything but laughs. Years before *Seinfeld* adopted the credo "No Hugging, No Learning," *Couple* lived it. There were no Very Special Episodes, no cliffhangers, no will-they-or-won't-they sexual tension (except for the homoerotic subtext underlying Felix and Oscar's relationship—just how "odd" was this couple?). When Nick at Nite's 2021 lineup contains '90s-nostalgia faves like *Seinfeld* and *Frasier*, chances are *The Odd Couple* will stand alongside them—and still be just as funny. Predicted grades in 2021: *The Odd Couple*: **A+** *Seinfeld*: **A-** *Murphy Brown*: **C-** *Frasier*: **A** *Friends*: **B-**

ILLUSTRATION BY ORLY FRIEDMAN

CAN CBS WIN BACK OLD VIEWERS?

'WELCOME' WAGGIN'

"A ZEBRA shouldn't change its stripes," says CBS Entertainment president Leslie Moonves, "nor should it want to. We want to be what we are."

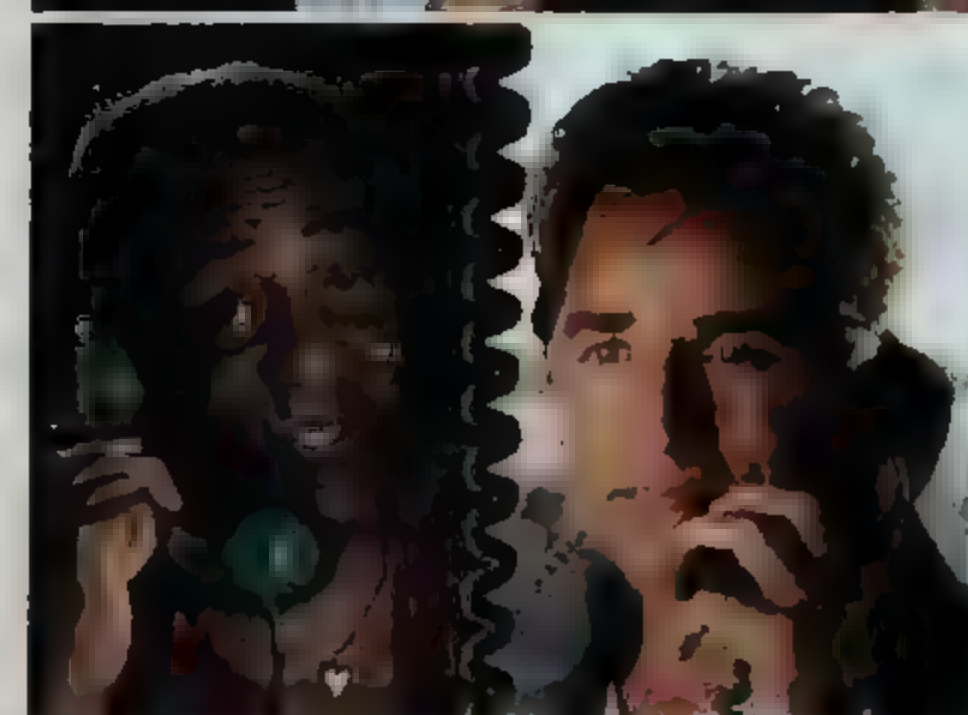
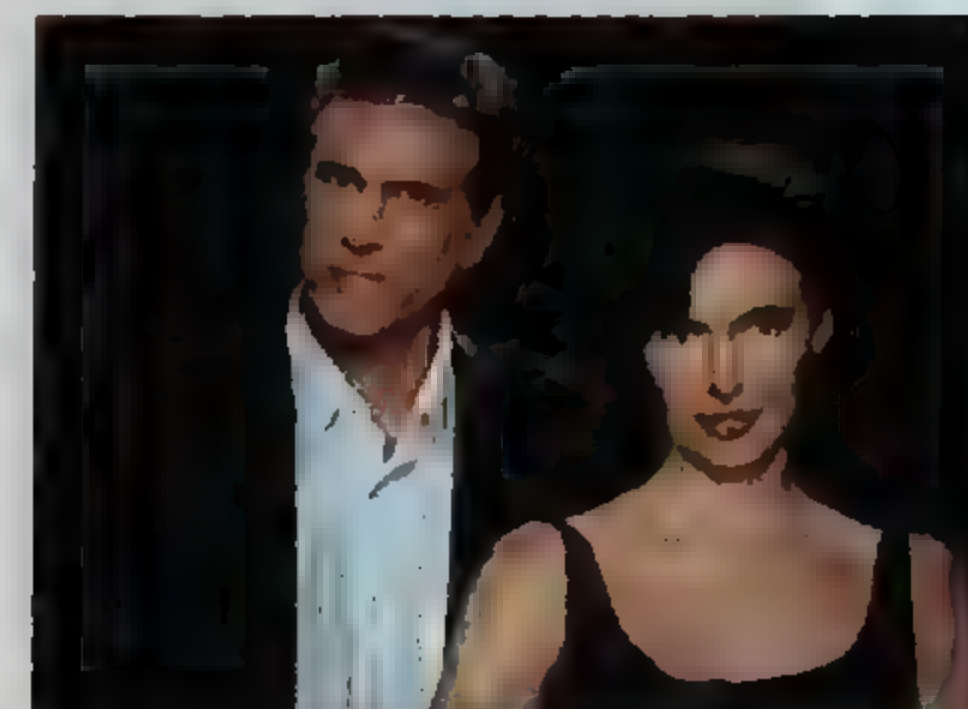
Or were. For the second time in as many years, CBS is pulling a 180 in an effort to redefine the network and lure a particular group of viewers (or target audience) to its programming—in this case, the same 25- to 54-year-old demographic it alienated with last season's botched attempt at grabbing the younger, Snapple-swilling set with *Melrose* ersatz *Central Park West* and *Friends*-lite *Can't Hurry Love*. In other words, everything new is old again.

The network's massive "Welcome Home" campaign, which kicked off in June and will hit full stride around Labor Day, centers on a series of promos with a three-part strategy: to trumpet the network's rich history (*The Honeymooners*, *I Love Lucy*); to show off its current stable of baby-boomer-friendly stars (Bill Cosby, Candice Bergen, Ted Danson and Mary Steenburgen, Cybill Shepherd, Don Johnson), several of whom snagged megabuck deals this year; and to create a non-threatening and wholesome place that will hopefully attract middle-American viewers without repelling coastal urbanites. "We've developed a very conscious tone," notes CBS marketing executive VP George F. Schweitzer. "Friendly, not condescending, invitational respect for the viewer."

Schweitzer is the first to admit that CBS' aggressive campaign was inspired by a rival. "[We have] a need for a stronger brand identity, and NBC has done that very well," he says. "Our world has become more complicated, and more channels means more confusion for the viewer."

Such image overhauls don't come cheaply: CBS will buy \$50 million-plus of cable TV, radio, and magazine ads, and use about \$400 million worth of airtime on its own network this year. The results from self-plugging are debatable, though. "On-air promos only reach the viewers CBS already has," reminds media analyst Whitey Chapin, "and that's not enough." Which is one reason for the cautious, albeit positive, early word from Madison Avenue. "The slogan works for what they are trying to do—they need people to come back to CBS," notes Chapin. "Now they need to do their job on their programming."

In Peoria, however, the campaign appears to be playing well: CBS' stations across the country think the campaign sends the right message. Even more encouraging is the apparent loosening of the company's purse strings—notoriously tight under former CBS Inc. CEO Larry Tisch. "Nobody thinks we're going to turn around like a PT boat," says Howard Kennedy of Omaha affiliate KMTV. "But we might be turning like a midsize battleship." Adds Dean Greve of Seattle affiliate KSTW: "For the longest time the country has been saying 'Let's get back to the way things used to be.' This campaign really strikes a chord." Come fall, we'll find out if Cosby and Co. can carry a tune. —Dan Snierson



WHEN MATURE CALLS: CBS' ads tout Danson and Steenburgen, Cosby, Johnson



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LOST DOCUMENTS

STUPID PILOT TRICKS

IT'S PERHAPS the most intriguing high concept for a TV series since Academy Award winner Sally Field became an airborne Bride of Christ in *The Flying Nun*. It's *Homeboys in Outer Space*, a wacky series about, well, homeboys in outer space, scheduled to debut this month on UPN, the fledgling network targeting urban viewers. No doubt you're asking yourself, how do they come up with this stuff? EW

was fortunate enough to stumble upon an internal UPN memo that sheds some light on the process of creativity in network television. Here's a look. (By the way, shouldn't someone tell UPN that nobody uses the word *homeboys* anymore?) —A.J. Jacobs and Kristen Baldwin



E.T. PHONE HOMIES: Darryl M. Bell (left) and Flax

To: UPN Series Development Division
Re: Project Homeboy

As discussed, here are the various possible premises for our "homeboy" sitcom. As you know, this will appeal perfectly to our target audience, with the added benefit of a low budget and lots of room for memorable characters and even potential for future merchandising tie-ins. Please advise on which variation you think works best for fall debut.

Homeboys in Salem: Two phat warlocks fly around on souped-up brooms turning wigged-out witch-hunters into sucka emcees. All wackiness ensues!

Homeboys in Camelot: Two phat brothers joust on their souped-up steeds, competing for the honor of dope damsels in distress. All wackiness ensues! *Right on!*

Homeboys in Outer Space: Two phat brothers galaxy-hop in their souped-up flying Chevy Impala (a.k.a. Space Hoopty) acting as everything from alien babysitters to planetary messengers. All wackiness ensues!

Homeboys in Gettysburg: It's phat brother against phat brother in this dramedy about the Civil War. A little less wackiness ensues.

Little Homeboys on the Prairie: Two phat brothers travel the prairie in a souped-up covered wagon, learnin' their rhymes in a one-room schoolhouse in Walnut Grove, Minn. Heartfelt wackiness ensues.

Homeboys at the Wailing Wall: Two phat brothers turn water into gin 'n' juice, spreadin' da Good Newz in rap-style parables. All wackiness ensues!

Homeboys in a Petri Dish: Two phat brothers—mysteriously turned into one-cell homeboys—practice mitosis and ride around on souped-up flagella. All wackiness ensues!

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THE WEEK

A guide to notable programs by
BRUCE FRETTS. (Times are Eastern
daylight and are subject to change.)

SERIES

BACK IN THE summer of '91, a little show called **BEVERLY HILLS, 90210** (Fox, Aug. 21, 8-9 p.m.) got a big boost from airing new episodes during the summer, before the fall deluge. Now Fox is giving the same treatment to the critically beloved but still struggling **PARTY OF FIVE** (Fox, Aug. 21, 9-10 p.m.), scheduling its third-season premiere on the same night as *90210*'s seventh-season opener. And perhaps not coincidentally, both shows stage summer road trips: *90210*'s Brandon (Jason Priestley) and Steve (Ian Ziering) head for the South, where Brandon hits it off with an African-American girl (Maia Campbell) and learns a hard lesson about racism. Meanwhile, *Party* boys Will (Scott Grimes) and Bailey (Scott Wolf) go south of the border to Mexico with their girlfriends (Alanna Ubach and Jennifer Love Hewitt) in tow. The underattended *Party* needs all the help it can get; starting in September, it'll face NBC's formidable *NewsRadio* as well as ABC's *Grace Under Fire*.

TAKING A CUE from Fox, The WB also tries to get a jump on the major networks by launching a



PARTY GLANCES: Hewitt and beau Wolf interface in the season premiere

slew of new series in late August. **THE STEVE HARVEY SHOW** (Aug. 25, 8:30-9 p.m.) casts the same stand-up who fell flat in ABC's *Me and the Boys* two seasons ago as an inner-city music teacher. Another new sitcom, **LIFE WITH ROGER** (Aug. 25, 9:30-10 p.m.), concerns a pushy stranger (Mike O'Malley) who invades the life of a henpecked nebbish (think *Cable Guy: The Series*). Aaron Spelling's latest drama, **7TH HEAVEN** (Aug. 26, 8-9 p.m.), stars Stephen Collins as a hip minister with a wife (Catherine Hicks) and five kids. (The WB switched *Heaven*'s time slot at the last minute so it won't air opposite CBS' values-packed *Touched by an Angel*.) **THE JAMIE FOXX SHOW** (Aug. 28, 9:30-10 p.m.) gives the *In Living Color* vet a *Martin*-esque forum to play various characters at a Hollywood hotel. Finally, despite its dumb title, **NICK FRENZ: LICENSED TEACHER** (Aug. 28, 8:30-9 p.m.) isn't the

worst of this fall's many school-set sitcoms: That honor goes to NBC's *Mr. Rhodes*.

UPN'S FALL strategy is simple: Copy what's working. That means lots of African-American sitcoms in the mold of *Moesha* and a few sci-fi shows à la *Star Trek: Voyager*. In the first category falls **MALCOLM & EDDIE** (Aug. 26, 8:30-9 p.m.), costarring ex-*Cosby* kid Malcolm-Jamal Warner and "hip-hop stand-up" Eddie Griffin as *Odd Couple*-like roomies; **GOODE BEHAVIOR** (Aug. 26, 9-9:30 p.m.), in which an ex-con man (*The Jeffersons*' Sherman Hemsley) moves in with his estranged son (*Dream On*'s Dorian Wilson); and **SPARKS** (Aug. 26, 9:30-10 p.m.), featuring *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*'s James Avery and *Head of the Class* grad Robin Givens as members of a law firm. Heading up the sci-fi category is **THE BURNING ZONE**

(Sept. 3, 9-10 p.m.), an *Outbreak* rip-off about doctors tracking killer viruses, among other things. And **HOMEBOYS IN OUTER SPACE** (Aug. 27, 8:30-9 p.m.) encompasses both categories. Then again, UPN reshot *Homeboys*' amazingly amateurish pilot, so who knows what wackiness will ensue?

MOVIES

ARMAND ASSANTE looks more like Desi Arnaz than Dapper Don John Gotti, but that's the least of the problems with the Mafia biopic **GOTTI** (HBO, Aug. 30, 8-10 p.m.). A weirdly sympathetic portrait of the imprisoned Gambino crime family boss, *Gotti* trots out all the Mob-movie clichés—slo-mo killings, espresso sipping, and clumsy dialogue like "You cannot whack a made man on somebody else's crew—there are rules!" An old hand at playing gangsters (he was Al Capone on *The Untouchables*' TV revival), William Forsythe gives the film's only standout performance, as "Sammy the Bull" (later "Sammy the Rat") Gravano. Anthony Quinn hacks up phlegm and chews scenery as stricken Gotti mentor Neil Dellacroce. We've seen it all before, and done much better, in *The Godfather* and *GoodFellas*.

ARTHUR PENN'S directorial career has careened from the zenith of 1967's *Bonnie and Clyde* to the nadir of 1989's *Penn & Teller Get Killed*. Perhaps inspired by the example of John Frankenheimer, another '60s auteur who made a comeback with PC cable movies like *The Burning Season*, Penn directs the South African drama **INSIDE** (Showtime, Aug. 25, 8-9:30 p.m.) The premise is gimmicky: In the 1980s, a sadistic warden (*The Madness of King George*'s Nigel Hawthorne) interrogates a political prisoner (Eric Stoltz). Ten

WINNER OF THE WEEK

Donal Logue

His motor-mouthed cabbie character may hitch a ride from MTV to the big screen with his own movie vehicle.



LOSER OF THE WEEK

Donal Logue

Unfortunately, the actor also stars in CBS' *Public Morals*, one of the most controversial—and least entertaining—new sitcoms of the fall season.

years later, in the post-apartheid era, the tables are turned, and the warden is interrogated by a former inmate (Louis Gossett Jr.). While Hawthorne etches a gleeful portrait of evil, Stoltz seems over-

whelmed by him, and Gossett merely overacts. Penn gives the film a static visual style meant to be claustrophobic, instead, it just makes *Inside* feel stazy. Better luck next time, Art.

LET'S HEAR IT for stating the obvious! The crux of **DEVIL'S FOOD** (Lifetime, Sept. 2, 8-10 p.m.), a cute farce about the cutthroat world of broadcast news, is that anchorwomen are judged more on looks than on journalistic ability! Alert Gloria Steinem! Suzanne Somers plays a chubby newswoman who sells her soul to the Devil (via Dabney Coleman, doing his bad-guy shtick as Lucifer's lackey) and then decides being thin isn't worth eternal damnation. Somers' built-in camp factor makes *Devil's Food* innocuously enjoyable, although it could never top her ButtMaster infomercial. —Kristen Baldwin

CHOICE RERUNS

TOM ARNOLD is setting sail in a film version of **McHALE'S NAVY** (Family, Aug. 24, 6-8 p.m.), but that won't be the '60s sitcom's first big-screen treatment. Back in 1964, during the series' run, Ernest Borgnine, Tim Conway, and crew made a *McHale* movie, now being brought out of mothballs by the Family Channel. While it's less offensive in retrospect than its fellow World War II comedy *Hogan's Heroes*, *McHale*'s still has its cringe-inducing moments (e.g., jokes about "the Japs"). But Borgnine (the only good thing about *The Single Guy*) and Conway are sure comic hands as the PT 73's skipper and ensign, respectively. And it's a kick to see future *Love Boat* captain Gavin MacLeod getting his sitcom sea legs as crewman Joseph "Happy" Haines.

SOUND BITES

"O.J. SIMPSON'S ex-girlfriend Paula Barbieri is now dating Mike Tyson.... They have a lot in common. Both have taken showers with murderers." —David Letterman on *Late Show*

"BOB DOLE [has] proven that he's in great medical shape. He's married to the head of the American Red Cross, so he can get fresh blood whenever he wants it." —Harry Shearer to John Hockenberry on MSNBC's *InterNight*

"IT WAS REPORTED today that Woody Allen and Soon-Yi Previn are engaged. He's really lucky—he doesn't have to go through that awkward evening of meeting her parents." —Conan O'Brien on *Late Night*

THE RATINGS

MUCHO MAGHO CHEESE



SLEAZY RIDERS: *Harley's Rourke* (L.) and Johnson revved up the ratings

USUALLY when cable networks try to counterprogram a sports event, they schedule female-friendly entertainment. Not so with the Atlanta Olympics. Opposite NBC's "feminized" coverage (i.e., lots of gymnastics and not much auto racing, and action movies flourished. TBS' airings of Chuck Norris' *An Eye for an Eye* and Don Johnson's *Harley Davidson and the Marlboro Man* attracted fans of the stars' hit shows, *Walker, Texas Ranger* and *Nash Bridges*. (Can a CBS series for Mickey Rourke be far behind?) Also scoring well is MTV's latest *Real World*; it doesn't hurt that this season is set in Miami and the young cast often runs around in bathing suits. As for series reruns, we still love Lucy—but we love Urkel even more.

VIEWERS' TOP 30 CABLE, ADULTS 18-49

- 1.46 **WCW MONDAY NITRO LIVE** TNT, Monday, 8 p.m.
- 1.37 **WCW MONDAY NITRO LIVE** TNT, Monday, 9 p.m.
- 1.25 **FAMILY MATTERS** TBS, Monday, 6:35 p.m.
- 1.24 **MOVIE: AN EYE FOR AN EYE** TBS, Sunday, 9:30 p.m.
- 1.20 **MOVIE: HARLEY DAVIDSON AND THE MARLBORO MAN** TBS, Sunday, 7:29 p.m.
- 1.19 **MOVIE: IN A CHILD'S NAME, PART 2** Lifetime, Wednesday, 10 p.m.
- 1.15 **THE REAL WORLD** MTV, Wednesday, 10 p.m.
- 1.11 **WCW SATURDAY NIGHT** TBS, Saturday, 6:05 p.m.
- 1.03 **FAMILY MATTERS** TBS, Tuesday, 6:35 p.m.
- 1.00 **FAMILY MATTERS** TBS, Wednesday, 6:35 p.m.
- 0.98 **BRICKYARD 400 PRE-RACE** ESPN, Saturday, 12 p.m.
- 0.98 **FAMILY MATTERS** TBS, Friday, 8:35 p.m.
- 0.98 **MOVIE: RENEGADES USA**, Saturday, 7 p.m.
- 0.95 **IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT** TNT, Sunday, 1 p.m.
- 0.95 **MOVIE: STAY THE NIGHT, PART 2** Lifetime, Friday, 10 p.m.
- 0.94 **I LOVE LUCY** Nick at Nite, Tuesday, 10:30 p.m.
- 0.94 **MOVIE: WILLY WONKA AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY** USA, Sunday, 9 a.m.
- 0.93 **MOVIE: FRIDAY THE 13TH, PART 2** TNT, Saturday, 11 p.m.
- 0.93 **WWF MONDAY NIGHT RAW** USA, Monday, 8:57 p.m.
- 0.93 **WCW MONDAY NITRO** TNT, Monday, 12:01 a.m.
- 0.92 **MOVIE: GARGOYLES** TBS, Sunday, 2:35 p.m.
- 0.92 **MOVIE: SUMMER RENTAL** TBS, Friday, 8:05 p.m.
- 0.92 **WCW MONDAY NITRO** TNT, Monday, 11:01 p.m.
- 0.91 **MOVIE: DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER** TBS, Wednesday, 8:05 p.m.
- 0.90 **AMERICA'S FUNNIEST HOME VIDEOS** TBS, Wednesday, 7:05 p.m.
- 0.90 **FAMILY MATTERS** TBS, Friday, 6:05 p.m.
- 0.90 **MOVIE: CIRCUMSTANCES UNKNOWN** USA, Saturday, 4 p.m.
- 0.89 **AMERICA'S FUNNIEST HOME VIDEOS** TBS, Monday, 7:05 p.m.
- 0.88 **I LOVE LUCY** Nick at Nite, Tuesday, 10 p.m.
- 0.88 **MOVIE: ABDUCTED** USA, Saturday, 5 p.m.

*IN MILLIONS. WEEK OF JULY 20-AUG. 4, 1996.
SOURCE: TBS ANALYSIS OF NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH DATA

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Jack in Action

He's back—and in the Oval Office. In *'Executive Orders,'* everyone's favorite Tom Clancy hero, Jack Ryan, returns to save the presidency, the country, and the world. **BY GENE LYONS**

SHOULD ALL OF the country's vaunted high-tech, computerized weapons systems—the real heroes of Tom Clancy's novels—ever fail, America could do worse than to load copies of **EXECUTIVE ORDERS** (Putnam, \$27.95) into catapults and hurl them over the enemy's walls. Ladies and gentlemen, this is a big book. How big? Whopper-class. 874 pages, with six or eight (depending on how you do the counting) simultaneous threats to

the survival of the American way of life.

We're talking major crises here: a Japanese airliner crashing nose-first into the U.S. Capitol, taking out not only the President but also both houses of Congress, most of the cabinet, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and all nine Supreme Court justices. And that's merely page 2. Then, before the smoke and rubble have cleared, Iran engulfs Iraq to become the United Islamic Republic and immediately begins scheming to conquer the world. Meanwhile,

a deadly virus breaks out from sea to shining sea, right-wing militiamen conspire to blow what's left of the government to kingdom come, a sleeper agent inside the Secret Service plots to assassinate the new President, and terrorists scheme to kidnap his youngest daughter.... Suffice it to say that President

Jack Ryan's first weeks in office are busy ones.

Yes, that's right, President Jack Ryan. Having reluctantly accepted the vice presidency, the brilliant, hero-

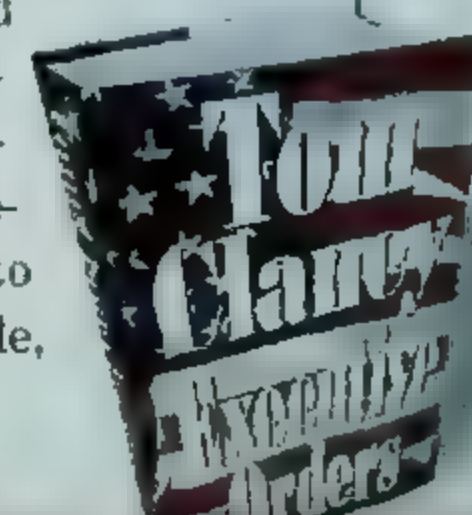


ILLUSTRATION BY JULIAN ALLEN

CANDACE BUSHNELL GETS DOWN AND DIRTY

'SEX' AND THE SINGLE GIRL

THE TROUBLES of two little people don't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world. But when Manhattan newspaper columnist Candace Bushnell recently broke up with her boyfriend, *Vogue* magazine publisher Ron Galotti, gossip pages gave the news valuable space that might otherwise have been appropriated by Madonna's baby. Why? Because (a) Bushnell, 37, writes an arch, talked-about "sex" column in the weekly *New York Observer*, reporting about high-impact mating rituals from the chicest of New York's dating trenches; (b) she shows up in her pieces dolled up as "Carrie" and calls Galotti "Mr. Big"—all other

real names are similarly disguised; and (c) the breakup occurred just before publication of *Sex and the City* (Atlantic Monthly Press, \$21), a collection of those columns, for which movie rights have been optioned by *Melrose Place* Mr. Big (and author's pal) Darren Star. Oops. What's a confessional-style author to do?

"I'll probably write something about the breakup," Bushnell declares in a Manhattan hotel tearoom, getting down to business with a procession of Merit cigarettes. "What's a private life anyway? In New York City, everybody knows everything about everyone else, so what's the big deal?"

WHAT ARE YOU WEARING? Bushnell covers her personal affairs

Bushnell writes about "toxic bachelors" ("Let's face it," one character says, "the unmarried guys in New York suck"); "modelizers" ("they love [the girls] for their beauty and hate them for everything else"); life with her wheeler-dealer, cigar-smoking beau (he bought her some ski paraphernalia she wanted "in exchange for a blow job"); and a universe of tough city chicks like herself, who have reached "this place of complete independence where we had the luxury of treating men like sex objects."

Why such swagger from a Connecticut-raised Yankee? "I should have been married by now," she says with a shrug. "But I don't want to be with just any old *shnurlly* guy." She shakes a hunk of honey-colored hair. "And I'm too busy thinking about my career. I guess I'm looking for the male version of me." Which, of course, means a guy who is happy to see details of his sex life in print. In New York? What's the big deal? —Lisa Schwarzbaum

ic CIA man—the protagonist of seven Clancy novels, beginning with *The Hunt for Red October*, as well as three films—has inherited the top job by default. Not that he's become a politician, understand. "It's all a...game here," he complains to his chief of staff, "and the object of the game isn't to do the right thing, the object of the game is to *stay* here."

No sooner does Ryan begin putting the government back together than America's foes begin to act up. The latest mad ayatollah mistakes him for a weakling, as do the leaders of India and China. Only Ryan's old enemies in the KGB recognize his formidable will and deadly anger.

Once the hero's bona fides are established, Clancy's convoluted plot lumbers along like a runaway freight train on a 2-percent grade—very slowly, but with impressive weight and momentum. For all of the author's bombastic rhetoric and the Tom Swift-meets-Charles Dickens sentimentality of his characters, there's an earnest, gee-whiz quality about the novel that's hard to dislike. (Whether it's movie material isn't clear: Paramount, which owns the Jack Ryan character, hasn't exercised its "first call" on the book.) When Clancy researches a topic—whether it's the care and feeding of the Ebola virus, the interpretation of satellite intelligence photos, or the performance capabilities of the M109A6 Paladin 155-mm mobile gun—he tells the reader all there is to know about it. Are the gadgets more interesting than the human characters? Always. Is the outcome a foregone conclusion? Absolutely. The way Clancy's millions of readers see it, that's part of the fun. **B**

Divine Vinyl

'Plastic' gets its due for a clearly lasting contribution

Poor old PLASTIC. Even its recent revival in the hands of retro-mad tastemakers has a bit of a kitschy, tongue-in-cheek sting to it. No one these days sincerely considers the stuff worthwhile.

No one, that is, but Stephen Fenichell. If he doesn't find the oft-maligned sub-

stance strictly beautiful, he's nonetheless going to give it its absolute due in **PLASTIC: THE MAKING OF A SYNTHETIC CENTURY** (HarperBusiness, \$25), an affectionately textbookish chronicle.

Plastic wasn't always hurting for such a champion. In fact, as the medium of Art Deco, nylons, and '60s mod, it has epitomized modernity and chic for the better part of this century. Yet the very qualities that make plastic so practical have proved its undoing. To many, environmentalists and antiques lovers included, plastic's permanence and replicability isn't reassuring. It's petrifying.

Bakelite, Saran Wrap, Plexiglas, Velcro, and others all come out for humble bows, alongside their mostly mad-scientist creators. For the Fenichellian approach to history is to pass it, Olympic-torch-style, from inventor to inventor. And while this method won't be to everyone's taste, the author's references to Pop artists and pop songs (quoting "R-E-S-P-E-C-T" is probably the most apropos citation) give his work the qualities we've come to expect from his subject material: It's lightweight yet durable, colorful but sensible, suited to many uses and contexts. **A-** —Alexandra Jacobs

BIG DEALS

◆ **BOOK** advances may be skyrocketing, but director **Oliver Stone** rated a mere \$100,000 for his epic novel in progress. *A Child's Night Dream*, due from St. Martin's in fall '97, is the story of a young man who comes of age in Vietnam. "This is a very personal, important project to Stone, one that he began several decades ago," says editor Robert Weil. "But it's not a roman à clef." It will be Stone's first work of fiction—in book form, that is.

◆ **RANDOM HOUSE'S** bid of around \$650,000 capped a lively auction for *The Wall Street Journal* reporter **Thomas R. King's** biography of entertainment baron **David Geffen**. The as-yet-untitled tome will be published sometime in 1999. —AJ

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THE WEEK

NONFICTION

FREAK SHOW: SIDESHOW BANNER ART Carl Hammer and Oldeon Bosker (*Chronicle*, \$14.95) Presented for your approval: an odd little sub-genre of American art. Or perhaps art isn't quite the word for these pictures, crafted to advertise the loony, hyperbolized traveling sideshows of the early to mid-20th century. Rendered in faded but still luscious purples, oranges, and greens, the illustrations exaggerated deformities—as well as “Hoo-La-La”-type assets—to attract a thrill-seeking, pre-horror-flick public. The taxidermists and sword swallowers were circus profiteers' bread and butter, but the authors take pains to declare that no one was being exploited here: The “freaks” weren't victims, they argue, but resourceful individuals making the most of their afflictions. This is the authors' only concession to social psychology, however. The book is really a look at the beauty and enterprise of false advertising—news of the weird at its bizarre and seamy best. **A** —AJ

E: REFLECTIONS ON THE BIRTH OF THE ELVIS FAITH John Strausbaugh (*Blast Books*, \$12.95) “Elvis lives in us.... There is only one King and we know who he is.” This guidebook to “Elvisism” demonstrates



STEP RIGHT UP, FOLKS: *Freak Show* is just the ticket for the oddity-obsessed, carnival-curious reader

that this near-religion has devotional orders (the fan clubs), priests in ornate vestments (the impersonators), sacred music and images (e.g., *Fun in Acapulco*), shrines (Graceland), and High Holy Days (each August, some 40,000 worshippers descend on Memphis to commemorate the King's 1977 death). Other celebrities who died young—James Dean, John Lennon—have their devout flame keepers, but only Elvis Presley actually turns up in apparitions, like the Virgin Mary (each year countless fans claim to have glimpsed him). Strausbaugh transforms what might have been simply an occasion for irony into a tough-minded and incisive study of religious psychology. The result is a triumph of



skeptical curiosity—worthy of an inquisitorial bonfire in the Elvis-ruled future. **A-** —L.S. Klepp

FICTION

LADY WITH A LAPTOP D.M. Thomas (*Carroll & Graf*, \$22) Simon Hopkins is a second-rate novelist who's managed to swing a summer gig in Greece, leading a writing workshop at a holistic holiday camp for grown-ups. Aside from fiction writing as therapy, the center offers colonic massages, gastric dancing, early-morning affirmation sessions, and consciousness-raising via orgasms. This means that Thomas gets to poke fun at veganism, meditation, and other New Age-isms,

as well as to twist a knife into real-life literary colleagues: Mystery writer Ruth Rendell is teaching on the next island over; Tim O'Brien led the previous fiction workshop. Thomas' alter ego, Hopkins, in a glorious nod to Harriet the Spy, jots down pithy sketches of his students and then carelessly leaves his notebook out. The outcome of that incident is only to be expected, which you cannot say for this book. Part farce, part murder mystery, part biting indictment of literary pretensions, *Laptop* is ultimately too much of a mishmash to truly satisfy. **C+** —Daneel Steffens

THE THIRD SISTER Julia Barrett (*Donald I. Fine*, \$22.95) In *Sense and Sensibility*, Jane Austen described



GOUP OF THE WEEK

Jay Leno

The *Tonight Show* host landed shutterbug Herb Ritts to shoot the cover for his upcoming autobiography, *Leading With My Chin*. Guess he wants to play up his most prominent asset.

Margaret—Elinor and Marianne's sister—as a sweet but silly girl who “did not, at thirteen, bid fair to equal her sisters at a more advanced period of life.” Barrett (a pseudonym) should have taken the master's word for it. Instead, in this “continuation” of Austen's novel, Margaret is fashioned as a righteous heroine in true romance-novel style. While living with her mother, she secures two suitors: a gorgeous lieutenant and a dull but solid family friend. Faced with the same basic choice that her sister Marianne once

was, how will she respond? More irksome than the plot is Barrett's hollow mimicry of Austen's style—and her outright failure to evoke Austen's wit. **C-** —Megan Harlan

MY FAVORITE WAR Christopher John Farley (*Farrar, Straus & Giroux*, \$20) Farley, a *TIME* magazine writer, shares a lot with the quick-quipping narrator of his satirical first novel, Thurgood Brinkman (both are thirtyish, African-American, and Harvard grads). Thurgood is miserably ensconced at a flashy newspaper when his crush on a beautiful black feminist columnist leads to a career-making opportunity to report on the Gulf War. Along the way, Thurgood smartly and caustically sounds off on everything from lesbian cybersex to interracial dating. It's an engaging story, but it's dulled by Farley's overuse of comedy—most of the characters, including Thurgood, are given smart-alecky short shrift. **B** —MH

WHEN WALLFLOWERS DIE Sandra West Prowell (*Walker*, \$22.95) In this third Phoebe Siegel mystery, the winter weather—“a dominatrix that whips us with polar winds and bitter cold”—makes a memorable adversary for the tough-talking PI (“Investigations with an attitude”). Siegel gets caught up in a case her detective dad tried to crack a quarter century ago: the brutal murder of a woman married to “a good-looking silver-haired guy” who had an eye on the governor's mansion. Soon the forgotten wallflower isn't the only one pushing up daisies, and the spunky detective is in pretty deep herself. Quirky characters such as the twin hookers Gin and Tonic, Dougie the Snitch, and Waxy Slater, a dangerous “hands-on kinda guy,” turn this into a rip-roaring read. **B+** —Nikki Amdur

PAPERBACKS

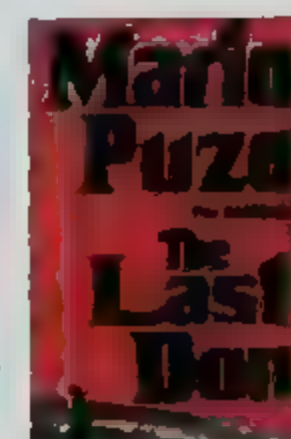
◆ **BETRAYALS** Charles Palliser (*Ballantine*, \$12.95, first published in 1994) This Scottish murder mystery is less a whodunit than a what-the-heck's-going-on. Ultimately, the real task isn't to solve the mystery, but to figure out the clever literary game Palliser is playing. **B+**

◆ **TAP, TAP** David Martin (*St. Martin's*, \$6.99, 1994) Martin keeps two stories at full boil: One is an account of Roscoe Bird, a decent guy trapped in a wrong-man scenario; the other, a portrait of his childhood friend (a prissy Eurosno vampire named Peter Tummelfier). The cold, expertly gruesome narrative is leavened with sick-joke twists. Taste yardstick: If *Pulp Fiction* was not your cup of entrails, then you might want to skip this one. **B**

BEST-SELLERS

MARIO, YOU 'DON' GOOD

IT'S BEEN ALMOST a quarter of a century since Mario Puzo's epic *The Godfather* made a killing, spawning a formidable, Oscar-bedecked film trilogy and irrevocably shaping America's view of Mob culture. Now Puzo's baaaack—with that old *famiglia* feeling. Random House originally conspired to publish *The Last Don* in late September but bumped up the book's release in order to enliven the slow summer season. And the strategy seems to be working: *Don* is at No. 2 in its second week, with a 350,000-copy first run, and CBS is already planning the miniseries. That's some syndicate.



FICTION

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----|
| 1 | SERVANT OF THE BONES | Anne Rice, Knopf, \$25.95 | 1 |
| 2 | THE LAST DON | Mario Puzo, Random House, \$25.95 | 2 |
| 3 | CAUSE OF DEATH | Patricia Cornwell, Putnam, \$25.95 | 5 |
| 4 | THE RUNAWAY JURY | John Grisham, Doubleday, \$26.95 | 12 |
| 5 | THE TENTH INSIGHT | James Redfield, Warner, \$19.95 | 15 |
| 6 | THE CELESTINE PROPHECY | James Redfield, Warner, \$17.95 | 127 |
| 7 | LILY WHITE | Susan Isaacs, HarperCollins, \$25 | 7 |
| 8 | HOW STELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK | Terry McMillan, Viking, \$23.95 | 14 |
| 9 | EXCLUSIVE | Sandra Brown, Warner, \$22.95 | 6 |
| 10 | GODS AND GENERALS | Jeff Shaara, Ballantine, \$25 | 10 |

NONFICTION

- | | | | |
|----|---|--|-----|
| 1 | UNLIMITED ACCESS | Gary Aldrich, Regnery, \$24.95 | 5 |
| 2 | THE DILBERT PRINCIPLE | Scott Adams, HarperBusiness, \$20 | 16 |
| 3 | THE ZONE | Barry Sears, Ph.D., with Bill Lawren, ReganBooks, \$22 | 24 |
| 4 | MEN ARE FROM MARS, WOMEN ARE FROM VENUS | John Gray, HarperCollins, \$23 | 174 |
| 5 | SIMPLE ABUNDANCE | Sarah Ban Breathnach, Warner, \$17.95 | 20 |
| 6 | OUTRAGE | Vincent Bugliosi, Norton, \$25 | 8 |
| 7 | BAD AS I WANNA BE | Dennis Rodman, with Tim Keown, Delacorte, \$22.95 | 14 |
| 8 | MIDNIGHT IN THE GARDEN OF GOOD AND EVIL | John Berendt, Random House, \$29 | 108 |
| 9 | UNDAUNTED COURAGE | Stephen E. Ambrose, Simon & Schuster, \$27.50 | 22 |
| 10 | EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE | Daniel Goleman, Bantam, \$24.95 | 43 |

MASS-MARKET PAPERBACKS

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|----|
| 1 | THE GREEN MILE, PART 5: NIGHT JOURNEY | Stephen King, Signet, \$2.99 | 1 |
| 2 | A TIME TO KILL | John Grisham, Dell/Island, \$6.99 | 88 |
| 3 | FROM POTTER'S FIELD | Patricia Cornwell, Berkley, \$6.99 | 7 |
| 4 | BEACH MUSIC | Pat Conroy, Bantam, \$7.99 | 9 |
| 5 | THE GREEN MILE, PART 4: THE BAD DEATH OF EDUARD DELACROIX | Stephen King, Signet, \$2.99 | 6 |
| 6 | A PLACE CALLED FREEDOM | Ken Follett, Fawcett, \$6.99 | 6 |
| 7 | COMING HOME | Rosamunde Pilcher, St. Martin's, \$7.99 | 6 |
| 8 | 'L' IS FOR LAWLESS | Sue Grafton, Fawcett, \$6.99 | 1 |
| 9 | THE GREEN MILE, PART 3: COFFEY'S HANDS | Stephen King, Signet, \$2.99 | 11 |
| 10 | THE GREEN MILE, PART 1: THE TWO DEAD GIRLS | Stephen King, Signet, \$2.99 | 19 |

SOURCE: PUBLISHERS WEEKLY



Here's another gem from Dr. Seuss, the beloved author of *The Cat in the Hat*. This time, his whimsical verse is illustrated by the award-winning team of Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher. It all makes for a magical book filled with colorful animals, playful type and, of course, that familiar bouncing rhyme.

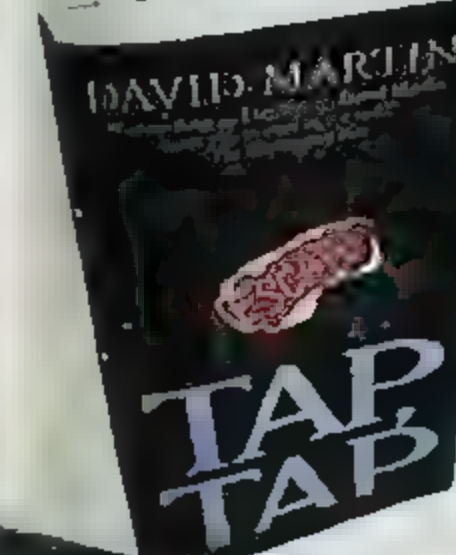
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Northwest Passage

Is Pearl Jam breaking out of the grunge ghetto or has Eddie Vedder merely seen the light? The alternately rocking and spiritual *No Code* suggests both. BY DAVID BROWNE

ON PEARL JAM'S fourth album, *NO CODE* (Epic, in stores Aug. 27), the unthinkable happens: Eddie Vedder almost seems relaxed, at ease. Until now, the band's most distinguishing feature was their singer's pent-up, sputtering presence. Only Vedder could sing a celebratory ode to vinyl records ("Spin the Black Circle," from 1994's *Vitalogy*, the band's previous and sturdiest album) and make it sound like a tirade about an unwarranted parking ticket.

No Code's first track, "Sometimes," is an immediate tip-off that change is afoot. The song is built on slender, almost skeletal, guitar plucks rather than the band's thrashy bluster. The subject of the song, though, comes as a far more unexpected surprise. "You're God and you got big hands...the challenges you give man," Vedder murmurs, adding that he will "seek my part/devote myself/my small self" to this higher power. This brief number reflects not only Vedder's collaborations with Pakistani singer Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan but also a new twist from the heroin-addled grunge generation: yearning spirituality.

The song is merely the beginning of a Pearl Jam album unlike any other—for better and, ultimately, for worse. The good news is that *No Code* cracks open their sound. Despite the progress heard from the arena swagger of their debut album, *Ten*, to the more lyrically detailed, idiosyncratic songs of *Vitalogy*, the band remained musically monochromatic. Reflecting the influence of their various side projects and offshoot bands, *No Code* displays a wider range of moods and instrumentation than on any previous Pearl Jam album. Vedder's work with Khan is

'CODE' BLUE: Vedder meditates on a higher power



To us, looks are everything. Obviously. Which is why we eat well and drink so much skim milk. The calcium helps prevent osteoporosis—you know that thing that weakens your bones and can make you look like a human camel. And besides, it's got good taste, just like us.

MILK

Where's your mustache?

NOW APPEARING IN
Matilda

DANNY DEVITO & RHEA PERLMAN AS LARRY & ZINNIA WOODWARD © 1994 NATIONAL FLUID MILK PROCESSOR PROMOTION BOARD

DISHWALLA SPOTLIGHT SANTA BARBARA

BANDS DU SOLEIL

FIVE YEARS AGO you couldn't buy a used flannel shirt in America for under \$10, so pervasive was the effect of Seattle's grunge manifesto. But thrift stores are full of those same threadbare garments once again, and the trendy tides that wash over the music industry have suddenly shifted south to a most unlikely shore...the dreamy seaside hamlet of Santa Barbara, Calif.

Previously known as that sun-drenched Shangri-la 100 miles north of L.A., where MOR vets like Michael McDonald and Kenny Loggins had gone to work on their tans, Santa Barbara had until last spring fostered only two successful contemporary rock acts: Toad the Wet Sprocket and Ugly Kid Joe. But in the span of two weeks this past June, local boys Dishwalla finally made a big splash with their single "Counting Blue Cars," Primitive Radio Gods surfaced after five years of semiretirement with "Standing Outside a Broken Phone Booth With Money in My Hand," and two other bands were signed to major label deals.

Perhaps fittingly, no town could be more unlike Seattle than Santa Barbara—and not just because it never rains. Where Seattle's bands all yelled grunge, Santa Barbara bands sing, shout, or whisper whatever they feel like, man. The new signings include Summercamp, a poppy quartet scooped up by Maverick, SNOT, a hard-rock band landed by Geffen, and folkie Cory Sipper, whose indie debut on numillennia will include cameos by Lindsey Buckingham and Mick Fleetwood.

According to industry insiders, labels were not responding to any kind of incessant buzz about Santa Barbara. Says Wendy Goldstein, A&R director of Geffen, "It was just a weird irony that they all got signed in the same month." Indeed, Dave Young, who manages both Dishwalla and Summercamp, refers to the town of 80,000 as "the anti-scene," a cozy nest where talent can develop away from the too-cool scrutiny of Seattle or the Sunset Strip. But, notes Young, that could change: "I have literally had A&R people call me and ask what the next Santa Barbara band is gonna be, because they want one on their trophy shelf."

For Santa Barbara's musicians, who have played along the town's fabled State Street, the June swoon was long overdue, and they've spent the summer savoring their success. Dishwalla bassist Scot Alexander remembers how he felt when Primitive Radio Gods took the stage just after his band at the Endfest, an annual alternative-music romp held Aug. 3 in, of all places, Seattle. "I was really proud," Alexander says. "Those were my bros up there." —Russ Spencer



GOLD RUSH: Labels are mining sunny Santa Barbara for the likes of Dishwalla (top) and Summercamp

heard in meandering mantras. Thanks to new drummer Jack Irons, the rhythms are freer; "In My Tree," seemingly yet another Vedder rumination on the price of success, is set to a drum that beats like a dribbling basketball. In basic terms, the album doesn't rock, yet its free-for-all eclecticism recalls the '60s, when rock groups used full-length albums to stretch out both their music and their minds.

Many bands—most recently, R.E.M. and the Smashing Pumpkins—have toyed with such sonic mood swings. But the experimentation backfires for Pearl Jam: *No Code* is their sloppiest, least cohesive work. Vedder's muttering-dervish meditations aim high, whether he is addressing coming to terms with the past ("Present Tense") or friends who have fallen off one wagon or another ("Habit" and "Off He Goes," on which he sounds more frustrated than angry at his pals). Yet his band mates don't have the musicianly chops to flesh out his ambitions. Their attempts at world-music pitter-patter are as thin as watercolor paint. Guitarists Stone Gossard and Mike Mc-

Cready seem most comfortable turning the volume up to 11 (or, on "Smile," imitating Neil Young's chunka-chunka guitars). But judging by half-baked ravers like "Lukin" and "Habit," Vedder's heart isn't into manic depression anymore.

Sharp songwriting, in terms of both musical hooks and pointed lyrics, has been a recurring problem for Pearl Jam. Even so, the breakthroughs heard on songs like "Rearviewmirror" (from *Vs.*) and "Better Man" (*Vitalogy*) are sorely missing here. The droning "Who You Are" has lyrics

that recall Krishna-era George Harrison: "Transcendental consequence," Vedder sings, "Is to transcend/Where we are/Who are we/Who we are." Nor should the band ever attempt a pretentious spoken-word recitation like "I'm Open." *No Code* becomes a collection of fragments that don't add up to much of anything, except a portrait of a musically disjointed band.

Pearl Jam are clearly at a crossroads on *No Code*—although, in fairness, they're not alone. Grunge, once a move-

ment against the hair metal and canned dance pop of the early '90s, conquered its enemies and, more important, fulfilled a larger role as an outlet for one generation's confusion and angst. But as that generation ages and its inner confusion abates, whither goes the music? For some, grunge has not proved to be the dead-end street punk was. The musicians who pioneered the genre have begun channeling its aggressive primitivism into metal (Soundgarden), Beatlesque pop in a cheery package (Foo Fighters), and classic-rock grandeur (the Screaming Trees). Their less imaginative peers—from founding fathers like the Melvins to Cobain-come-latelys like Candlebox—already seem lost, instant relics from another time.

Pearl Jam ring the grunge-is-dead bell loudest on *No Code*, but the most commercially successful of all these outfits seem unsure of what should replace it. Trapped somewhere between purgatory and bliss, the album leaves you with the vaguely unsettling feeling that Pearl Jam without pain are like a pretzel without salt, or Seattle without rain. **C**

Buzz Cuts

A new EP from pot rappers
Cypress Hill is truly dope

WHAT A DIFFERENCE a year—and a stiff album—makes. On 1995's *III* (*Temple of Boom*), Cypress Hill went one toke way over the line; in one of pop's most blatant fits of paranoia and delusion, L.A.'s leading pothead rappers dissed everyone even remotely in their path, especially fellow hip-hop acts who'd supposedly betrayed them. Looking to rebound from that disaster,

Cypress return with **UNRELEASED & REVAMPED** (Ruffhouse/Columbia), a nine-track, marking-time EP that finds them working with—surprise!—hot-streak rap ensembles like Fugees and A Tribe Called Quest.

The collaborations aren't merely timely and market savvy: They succeed in blowing the bad haze (if not the recurring gun imagery) away from Cypress Hill's music. The remixes of "Boom Biddy Bye Bye" and "Illusions"—by Fugees and Tribe's Q-Tip, respectively—work wonders. The airy, stripped-down rearrangements, which hint at the beautifully spacey grooves of trip-hop, soften the claustrophobic belligerence of the original recordings. Exhaling a series of melodic aahs throughout "Boom Biddy Bye Bye," Fugees frontperson Lauryn Hill softens the nasal-congestion style of Cypress' B-Real. The EP's only previously unreleased track, the 1994 outtake "Whatta You Know," is typical of Cypress Hill's latter-day bad trip; its tale of a burglar leads into a don't-trust-your-homeboys message. It's the only buzzkill on an otherwise welcome sonic lube job. **B+** —DB



THE HILL ARE ALIVE: Cypress weed out their worst on *Unreleased*

melissa
etheridge

your little secret

melissa etheridge



your little secret

featuring the smash hit single
"nowhere to go"
also includes "I can't stop
and "best of all
on tour everywhere
through december



THE WEEK

SINGLES

FIONA APPLE "Shadowboxer" (Work) Forgoing the theatrical anger so popular with female singers today, newcomer Apple takes a restrained approach on this torch ballad. Singing to a former lover, her slurred, smoky vocals float above a loping, gospel-tinged piano, vibes, and string arrangement, making her sound like Nina Simone covering early Elton John. Although she's only 18, she has the poise of a seasoned singer. **A-** —Steven Mirkin

REPUBLIC "Ready to Go" (RCA) The debut single from this English quintet erupts with a blast of fuzzed-out power chords, driving dance rhythms, and a rallying sing-along chorus. They claim their sound is "techno-pop punk rock," but cheesy '80s new wave with a female vocalist and an updated '90s break beat is more like it. Garbage has nothing to worry about. **C** —Tracey Pepper

POP/ROCK

SAM PHILLIPS *OmniPop* (Virgin) As a songwriter, Sam Phillips is a case study in creative development: Her charmingly self-conscious lyrics have consistently eclipsed her less impressive melodies. On *OmniPop*, the reverse is true: Her music is



MAKING THE GRADE? Phillips scores high musically but suffers lyrically

confident and assured, but her lyrics convey all the depth of a tortured graduate student. **C** —Wook Kim

SEBADOH *Harmacy* (Sub Pop) True, 1994's brilliant *Bakesale* would be a tough yardstick by which to measure anyone, but for the first time in their seven-year career, indie rock's most promising trio release an album that isn't a vast creative leap over the one that preceded it. *Harmacy* does boast a few of the crystal, shining, forever moments with which *Bakesale* was loaded; the overall effect, though, is one of a band stuck in an above-average rut. **B-** —Ethan Smith

DAVE SOLDIER *The Kropotkins* (Koch) New York avant-gardist David Soldier and a cadre of experimentalists take apart the Mis-

issippi Delta Blues and reassemble them into a jagged, slightly nightmarish soundscape. The core instruments are fiddle, banjo, and drums (plus Lorette Velvete's flat-affect vocals). You would expect so self-consciously arty an enterprise to reek of pretentiousness; instead, it's funky and listenable. **B+** —Tony Scherman

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Leonard Bernstein's New York (Nonesuch)* A great romantic's Gotham, brought to you by six top cabaret singers and the Orchestra of St. Luke's. Of all Bernstein's music, his Apple-inspired work—*West Side Story*, *On the Town*, and *Wonderful Town*, all represented here—is the most likely to last. Audra McDonald captures your heart with "A Little Bit in Love," Dawn Upshaw and Richard

Muenz break it with "One Hand, One Heart," and nobody wears a coating of shtick as winningly as Mandy Patinkin. Lovely and sumptuous. **A** —Tony Scherman

GABRIELLE *Gabrielle* (Go! Discs/London) Despite her smooth, distinctive voice and songwriting talent, Gabrielle takes a step backward with this languid follow-up to *Find Your Way*. The new CD boasts only one hummable tune, "Forget About the World," and even it won't approach the popularity of her 1993 hit "Dreams." The other dozen songs sound too much alike—gently soulful but unbelievably dull. If you need a soothing bedtime album, this will do the trick. **C+** —William Stevenson

MANIC STREET PREACHERS *Everything Must Go* (Epic) These British iconoclasts have worked up quite a following at home by juxtaposing brassy agitprop with hair-swinging arena-rock flourishes. On their fourth album they focus on more personal concerns and come up with a document of bracing, guitar-swept compositions that yields many a trenchant insight as well as a few anthems. **A** —Mike Flaherty

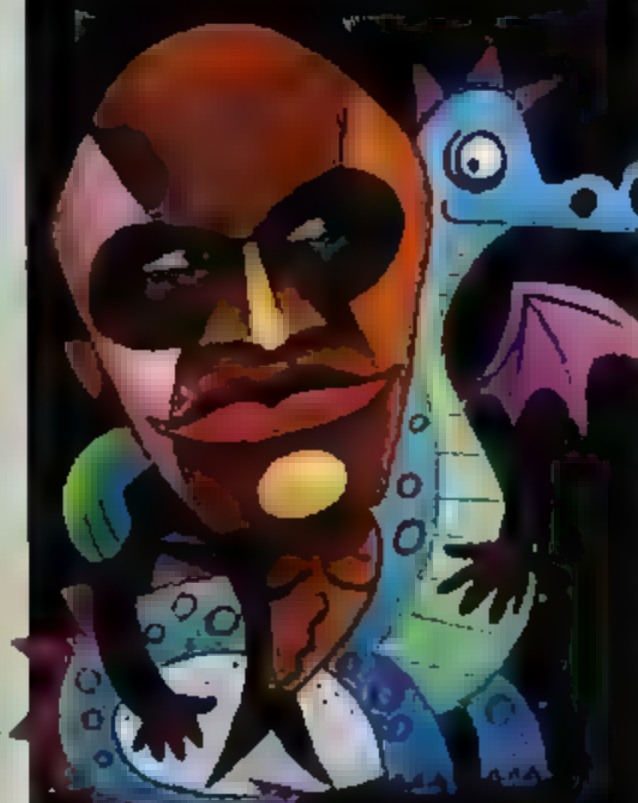
HOODOO GURUS *Blue Cave* (Zoo) Sarcastic wit and chunky rhythm let these Australian garage-rock journeymen get away with all sorts of tricks: psychedelic arrangements, spaghetti-western guitars, sprinted tempos, party voices, even an outlandish Little Miss Muffet rewrite that crosses the Who's "Boris the Spider" with Focus' opera-metal oklie "Hocus Pocus." The jangler ballads are pressy; otherwise, this is a model grunge bands could learn from. **B+** —CE

NEW BOMB TURKS *Scared Straight* (Epitaph) Over the course of several releases, this Columbus, Ohio-based quartet has grown into one of

FOLKIE OF THE WEEK

Seal

On the forthcoming *For Our Children Too!*, a pediatric AIDS benefit compilation, the British crooner will tackle "Puff (the Magic Dragon)."



PINCH HITTER OF THE WEEK

Dennis Flemion

The Smashing Pumpkins have picked Flemion (whose claim to fame is penning songs like "Dykes Are We" for his band, the Frogs) to replace late keyboardist Jonathan Melvoin for the remainder of their current tour.

the fastest, hardest, and tightest punk bands around. Sure, there are plenty of other outfits working similar territory, but the Turks really are special—and smart enough to know that throwing a bit of Stoner ranch into their post-hardcore mix is no crime. **A-** —Tom Sinclair

THE BLUETONES *Expecting to Fly* (A&M) The debut from these London-based pretty boys arrives with all of Britpop's requisite emphasis on song craft—then goes it one better: Conjuring a hybrid of once-influential forebears—the textured thoughtfulness of Aztec Camera with the hip-swaying buoyancy of the Stone Roses—accusation and introspection entwined in their sprightly, energized odes. **B+** —MF

THE CONNELLS *Weird Food & Devastation* (TVT) A decade after their first release, the Connells are

still combining the honey-dipped melodies of English pop with the melancholy folk rock of vintage R.E.M., a formula that's old but still mostly works. And even when *Weird Food* stalls musically, the band's lyrics about disillusionment and regret keep the songs moving. **B-** —Jon Wiederhorn

COUNTRY

THE BEACH BOYS *Stars and Stripes, Vol. 1* (River North) On the first of two CDs, the venerable '60s group supplies background vocals to a dozen country stars (e.g., Doug Supernaw, Toby Keith) performing the Boys' timeless songs. Unfortunately, the vibrations aren't so good. It isn't that the two camps don't phrase alike, they don't even speak the same musical language. The most successful tracks come from singers like Lorrie Morgan and Willie Nelson, whose styles bridge the country-pop divide. **D** —Alanna Nash

BILLY RAY CYRUS *Trail of Tears* (Mercury Nashville) The surprise on Cyrus' fourth album comes from his own material, a rapidly maturing, bleeding-heart blend of roots rock and country classics wrapped in bare-bones production. Some may still consider Cyrus to be a one-hit wonder, but there's wit behind his wiggle: the brooding Celtic-influenced "Need a Little Help" and bluegrass-based title song should finally make him an artistic contender. **B** —AN

TY HERNDON *Living in a Moment* (Epic) Apparently, Herndon's producer thinks that one terrific song (in this case, the title cut) is enough to carry an album. Aside from the old-style "Don't Tell Mama," a death-scene confessional Porter Wagoner would have killed for, Herndon's formulaic second effort is the definition of bland. **C+** —AN

JAZZ

ORNETTE COLEMAN *Sound Museum: Three Women*; *Sound Museum: Hidden Man* (Harmolotie/Verve) Avant jazz pioneer Coleman's return to an acoustic setting—and his first use of piano in that format in over 35 years—triumphs, due to the artist's still-quirky writing and improvisatory blueprints, his febrile alto saxophone solos, and the responsiveness of the band, particularly Gerri Allen's darting keyboard work. Both CDs mainly use the same compositions yet furiously burst with diversity. Whether his peers choose to follow him or not, Coleman still leads the jazz pack. Both: **A** —Steve Fretterman

THE CHARTS

CHAINS REACTION

THERE MAY be life left in the old franchise yet. MTV has been producing far fewer *Unplugged* episodes of late, trying to preserve the specialness of its acoustic showcase after a wave of affiliated albums glutted the market a couple years back. For Alice in Chains, this slowdown may have paid off. Though their MTV-endorsed live set dips three spots to No. 6 this week, it's still outperforming the chart showings of most past unpluggies (the only other one of which this year has been Kiss). For the right band at the right time, there's still a buck to be made in trading in Marshall stacks for stools.



POP ALBUMS

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	POP ALBUMS	WEEKS ON CHART
1	2	ALANIS MORISSETTE <i>Jagged Little Pill</i> , Maverick/Reprise	61
2	4	NAS <i>It Was Written</i> , Columbia	6
3	5	CELINE DION <i>Falling Into You</i> , 550 Music/Epic	22
4	9	NO DOUBT <i>Tragic Kingdom</i> , Trauma/Interscope	32
5	7	TONI BRAXTON <i>Secrets</i> , LaFace/Arista	8
6	3	ALICE IN CHAINS <i>Unplugged</i> , Columbia	2
7	1	A TRIBE CALLED QUEST <i>Beats, Rhymes and Life</i> , Jive	2
8	0	BONE THUGS-N-HARMONY <i>E 1999 Eternal</i> , Ruthless/Relativity	55
9	11	FUGEES <i>The Score</i> , Columbia	26
10	8	METALLICA <i>Load</i> , Elektra	10

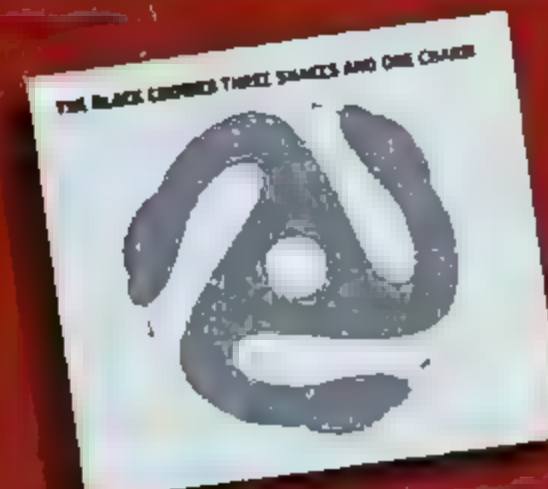
R&B ALBUMS

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	R&B ALBUMS	WEEKS ON CHART
1	3	NAS <i>It Was Written</i> , Columbia	7
2	1	A TRIBE CALLED QUEST <i>Beats, Rhymes and Life</i> , Jive	2
3	4	KEITH SWEAT <i>Keith Sweat</i> , Elektra	7
4	2	UGK <i>Idiot's Dirty</i> , Jive	2
5	6	TONI BRAXTON <i>Secrets</i> , LaFace/Arista	8
6	—	FACEMOB <i>The Other Side of the Lane</i> , Virgin	1
7	5	MR. MIKE <i>Wicked Ways</i> , Suave House/Relativity	2
8	7	SOUNDTRACK <i>The Nutty Professor</i> , Def Jam/Mercury	10
9	8	THE ISLEY BROTHERS <i>Mission to Please</i> , T-Neck/Island	13
10	9	JAY-Z <i>Reasonable Doubt</i> , Ruffe/Roc-A-Fella/Priority	8

CONCERTS

DATE	ARTIST	VENUE	TICKET SALES
1	1	EAGLES London	\$2,213,203
2	1	EAGLES Edinburgh	\$2,053,676
3	3	NEIL DIAMOND Minneapolis	\$1,519,295
4	2	KISS Boston	\$1,257,175
5	2	KISS Cleveland	\$1,150,083
6	2	LOLLAPALOOZA '96 Irvine, Calif.	\$1,071,590
7	2	NEIL DIAMOND Auburn Hills, Mich.	\$1,048,043
8	3	GARTH BROOKS Portland, Ore.	\$987,714
9	1	EAGLES Manchester, England	\$755,554
10	1	GLORIA ESTEFAN San Antonio	\$713,564

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Carnage Knowledge

Forget the psychosexual implications: 'Quake,' the ultraviolent offspring of the best-selling 'Doom,' is a smashing computer game despite its faults. BY BOB STRAUSS

WHAT MIGHT Sigmund Freud make of a game like **QUAKE** (id Software, CD-ROM for PC, \$50 for four-episode version; single-episode shareware version available over the Internet at www.idsoftware.com)? In this follow-up to *Doom*, one of the most popular computer games of all time, players are represented on screen by a succession of lethal, priapic weapons that pump bullets, shotgun shells, and nine-inch nails into bad guys. Arguably, there are more violent games—the *Mortal Kombat* series is no *Sunday in the Park With George*—but *Quake*, like its daddy, *Doom*, and its granddaddy, *Wolfenstein 3D*, reduces participants to grunting, ambulatory phallic symbols.

Of course, as Freud himself might say, sometimes a double-barreled shotgun is just a double-barreled shotgun. So, leaving aside the supposition that 90 percent of *Quake*'s audience consists of sexually frustrated males, it's worth examining this game's incredible carnage quotient—and asking how society got to the point where it's acceptable to link up with pals over a worldwide computer network (the way to play, unless you prefer a more solitary experience) and blow their virtual heads off.

It all started four years ago with id's *Wolfenstein 3D*, a primitive gorefest that at least had the virtue of a well-defined enemy—to wit, Nazis. Although *Wolfenstein 3D* was probably the bloodiest game of its day, it's hard to hold id responsible for desensitizing impressionable teens when Nazis have been blown up, impaled, and incinerated in 50 years of World War II movies. Though *Doom* is populated mainly by bloodthirsty demons, players get to decimate enough



ILLUSTRATION BY HUNGRY DOG STUDIO

Homo sapiens that the game veers, at times, uncomfortably close to an interactive snuff movie. (It doesn't help that game hackers can alter the appearance of the bad guys to resemble their bosses, or even custom-design levels to resemble their places of work.)

Which brings us to *Quake*, an extended bit of subterranean mayhem that offers three major improvements over its immediate predecessor. First, the game's graphics have more depth: Its dank corridors, twisty labyrinths, and shaky bridges over lethal rivers of flame give you the uncanny feeling of being trapped in a textured, sharp-cornered nightmare, rather than in the flattened-out hallucinations of *Doom* and *Wolfenstein 3D*. Second, the under-your-skin sound effects and ambient music on the \$50 disc were composed by Nine Inch Nails' Trent Reznor, who's been known to ponder a few issues concerning sex, violence, and gruesome death. And third, on a simple cost-per-kill basis, *Quake* is the most cathartic experience you can legally have within the confines of your own home, as you blow away vicious dogs, brutish ogres, and armed-to-the-teeth enemy infantrymen (although, unlike *Doom*, you can't paste your spouse's face onto a demon's body). It may not be healthy—heck, it may not even be normal—but it is a lot of fun.

As with *Doom*, id Software has made the first episode of *Quake* available as free shareware via the Internet, thus luring players to cough up cash for the full, four-episode version (which you'll eventually be able to download for a fee from the company's website or buy on CD-ROM). When I was in elementary school, well-meaning teachers used to present this as the modus operandi of drug dealers: Get kids hooked on free samples, then rake in the dough when they need to satisfy their joneses. And anyone who's ever experienced an officeful of twentysomethings playing networked *Doom*—shouts of "Die, you sonofabitch!" punctuating the tap-tap-tap of computer keyboards—will marvel at the variety of things people can get themselves addicted to.

It may not surprise you, then, that I feel a deep inner conflict about assigning this game a grade. My superego says it deserves an **F**, but beware the monsters of the id—they give it a **B+**.

CYBERTALK



TRICKS OF THE SPADE

"I STILL GO [to hometown Scottsdale, Ariz.] as much as possible to regain sanity, alphabetize my colognes, and hang out in front of Hickory Farms and try to get recognized. The smaller the population of a state, the more I can trick them into thinking I'm a star." —*Saturday Night Live*'s **David Spade** on America Online

"I WAS TRYING to be a litigator and a trial lawyer, and not a circus ringmaster. Besides, there are so many lawyers out there who aren't ashamed to say they are so much better at this than me. Let them handle the retrial—while I make \$5,000 a week trashing them on TV." —O.J. Simpson prosecutor **Christopher Darden** on Prodigy

"I THINK THAT many people thinking of me as a 10-year-old is not a stretch, especially my mother. I know I did well if I get a phone call from Michael Jackson." —*Jack*'s **Robin Williams** on AOL

"I HAVE A film I just finished. The title is *Booty Call*, and for those of you who don't know what 'booty call' is, it's what happens when somebody calls somebody else at two in the morning, because they want to get with you." —*In Living Color*'s **Jamie Foxx** on Prodigy

"I NEVER CARRIED a gun, but I did do surveillance. One night in Brooklyn at three in the morning, standing under a streetlight, while the rain came down on me and a three-legged dog hopped by, I thought, 'I've gotta get out of this!'" —*Seinfeld*'s **Wayne Knight** on NBC.com

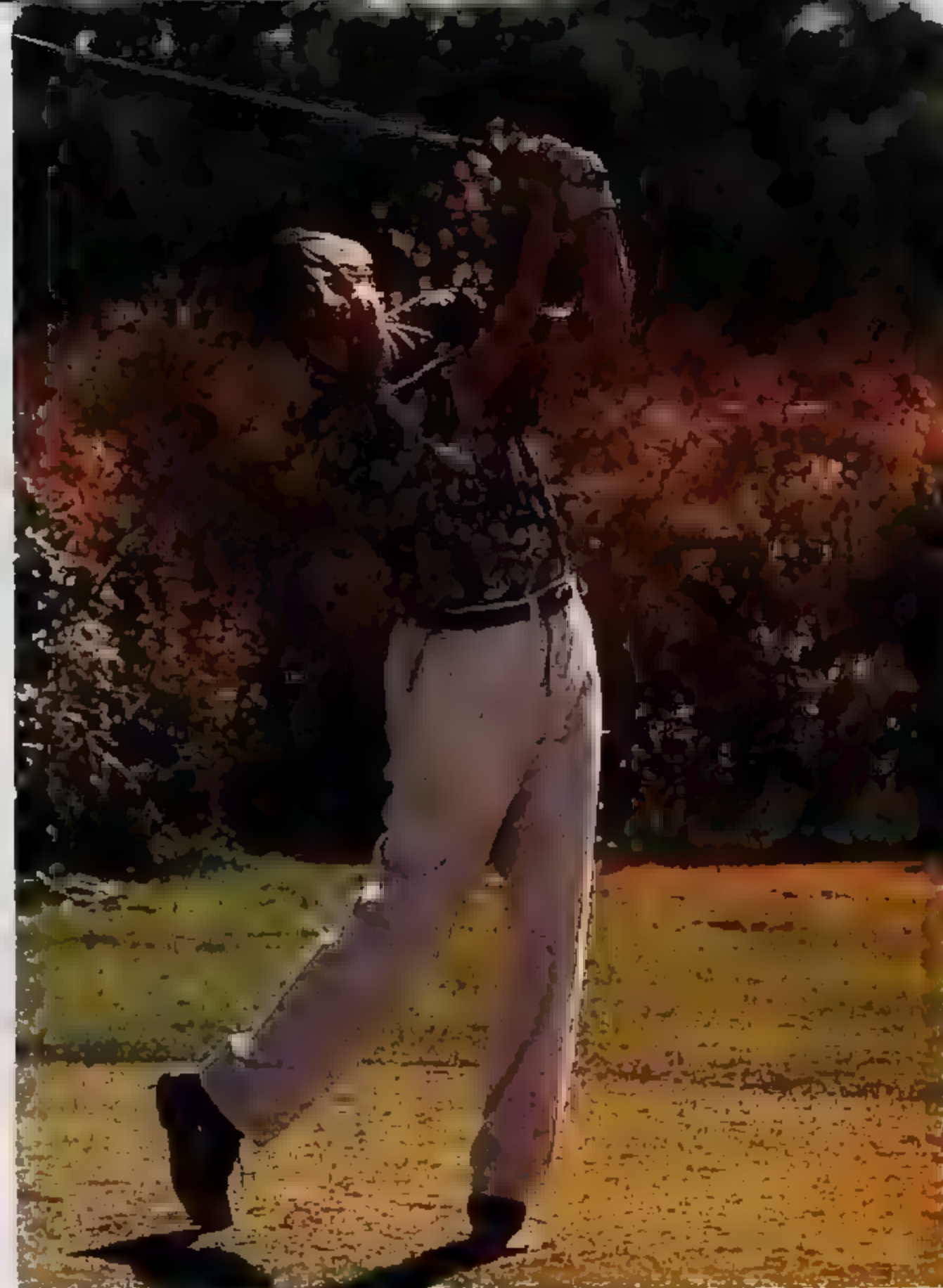
"I HATE [THE *American Gladiators*] uniform. It's tight, it constantly crawls, what more can I say? I do feel like I'm wearing a bathing suit, but I have no say in what I wear [on the show]." —**Lori Loughlin**, a.k.a. Ice, on AOL

LOCALE HEROES: Spade (left) gets sentimental; Knight falls in Brooklyn

THE WEEK

WEBSITES

■ ONLINE (www.conline.com) Ever wonder what Madonna sings in the shower? Then check out the new, nifty, and huge *E! Online*, where "Tales From the Womb," the alleged diary of Madonna's unborn baby, will tell you: "Walk like a woman and talk like a man." This Web version of cable's gossipy *E!* Entertainment Television, 70 percent of whose content is exclusive to the site, addresses other pressing issues, like celebrities' golf handicaps (*Tin Cup*'s Kevin Costner has a 16) and their sleepwear preferences (see the nighties of Winona Ryder and Vanessa Williams!). All this, and every two weeks a new celeb (most recently, Superman Dean Cain) will supposedly answer your E-mail. For an entertainment-oriented website, there's surpris-



CLUB KEY: Costner, whose handicap *E! Online* reveals, is a real swinger

ingly little audio and video—mostly just words, words, words. The only question that remains: Will the people who like to watch now want to read? **B+** —Bruce Forer

RIDING 'JURASSIC PARK' ONLINE

RAPTOR'S DELIGHT

JURASSIC PARK BOASTS more begats than the Old Testament. In the beginning, there was Michael Crichton's 1990 novel, which spawned Steven Spielberg's 1993 block-

buster movie, which in turn bred two mediocre Sega Genesis games and the Universal Studio theme park's new \$100 million ride. Now the dino franchise invades cyberspace with *JURASSIC PARK—THE RIDE ONLINE ADVENTURE* (www.jurassic.unicity.com).

JAWS: Renegade dino opens wide the multilevel labyrinthine game you hunt down an escaped velociraptor before it attacks you. Because the thorny game's chockful of video and audio, you'll need a Java-enabled browser, such as Microsoft Explorer 3.0 or Netscape 2.02+. Skillful players will kick lizard butt, others will become raptor lunch meat. Either way, it ain't no petting zoo. —Kipp Cheng

SWOON (www.swoon.com) Condé Nast's *Swoon* is less a cybersite for the magazine company's titles, such as *GQ*, *Details*, and *Mademoiselle* (though selected articles from each are available), than a full-blown original-content bazaar. Young, single urban mods are the intended audience, but there's a sense of humor here that keeps the hipper-than-thou hauteur to a minimum—not to mention a personals section for the wired and the desperate. From the "No-B.S. Roommate Contract" (personalized and printable, match) to a quiz to help you establish whether you in fact have a thing for that platonic friend, *Swoon* is cute, funny, and just the right bite-size. **B+** —Ty Burr

GAME

QIN: TOMB OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM (Time Warner Electronic Publishing, CD-ROM for PC, \$49.95) While *Qin* is yet another CD-ROM that owes its existence to *Myst*, its high quality makes it more an affectionate tribute than a bald-faced rip-off. In this low-key, oddly soothing exploration game, players wander through a recently unearthed 2,200-year-old tomb in northern China, translating arcane inscriptions and solving devilishly complicated logic puzzles (and, along the way, learning about ancient Chinese ideograms). *Qin*'s structure is nothing new—like its inspiration, the game unfolds as a se-

ries of lush still photos and doesn't offer players much in the way of assistance, but its authentic-looking artifacts and ambient, atonal music make it as novel an experience as attending an archaeological exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. **A-** —BS

REFERENCE

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? (HarperCollins, CD-ROM for PC and Mac, \$39.95) If you're looking for answers to this question, they won't be found in this prosaic personality profiler based on the 1994 book of the same name. After you submit to a seemingly endless series of tests, the disc crunches and compares personal scores with a database of 50 famous folk. (I was dismayed to learn that my feared self-image was similar to Jack Kerouac's and my unified self like Sylvia Plath's.) The initial thrill of the psychobabble analysis wanes quickly, however, when you realize the vague terms could apply to most anyone. The disclaimer warns that "this does not provide any form of psychotherapy," but the promise of meaningful self-examination could trick some into believing the slickly packaged mumbo jumbo. Like the *Psychic Friends Network*, this CD-ROM ends up being awkward entertainment for adults. **C** —KC

ONLINE EVENTS

Scheduled for the week of Aug. 19–25. All listings are Eastern daylight and are subject to change.

8 / 19

◆ **ORSON SCOTT CARD** (CompuServe, Go Convention, 9 p.m.) The sci-fi author talks about (and gives away some copies of) his current work, *Treasure Box*.

◆ **DEVO** (America Online, Keyword: Warner, 9:30 p.m.) The new wave pioneers preview their new album, *Shout*.

◆ **NEVE CAMPBELL** (AOL, Keyword: Oldsmobile, 10 p.m.) Party of Five star discusses the Fox show's fall season.

8 / 20

◆ **MARILYN HENNER** (AOL, Keyword: Oldsmobile, 10 p.m.) The *Taxi* alum and onetime talk show host chats about her upcoming Lifetime TV movie, *For the Future: The Irvine Fertility Scandal*.

◆ **MARIO VAN PEEBLES** (AOL, Keyword: NetNorr, 9 p.m.) The actor talks about his new action flick, *Solo*.

Always a Bridesmaid, Never a Bride (It's cool, I'm not a big fan of commitment.)

Best friend, a.k.a.
Permanent Wedding
Date. Been through
this so many
times he decided
to buy the tux.

Lime green, gross.
(Like I'll ever wear
this again.)

Caught the bouquet (Sue's)
and the only other
thing I've caught since
is a cold.



Visa Purchases:

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Crystal swan for Meredith - \$96.25

Crystal swan for Elyse - \$96.25

(Good thing they don't know each other.)

Hotel suite - \$364.34

(For Elyse's bachelorette party;
I'm supposed to be reimbursed
but I'm not holding my breath.)

Grand Total: \$653.09

(Well that's a banner month.
Luckily I only have one wedding
next month.)

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the past two months.
(How else could I fit
into these taffeta wonders?)

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The Wizard of Odd

A one-man gallery of twisted rogues, John Malkovich works his strange magic in the new-to-video 'Mary Reilly,' 'Mulholland Falls,' and 'The Convent.' BY TY BURR

GAMES MOVIE buffs play No. 472: comparing today's stars with their illustrious forebears from Hollywood's Golden Age. You know: Brad Pitt equals James Dean minus anguish and depth. Sharon Stone equals Lana Turner plus irony. Demi Moore equals Susan Hayward minus clothes plus Joan Crawford's scintillating sense of humor. That sort of thing.

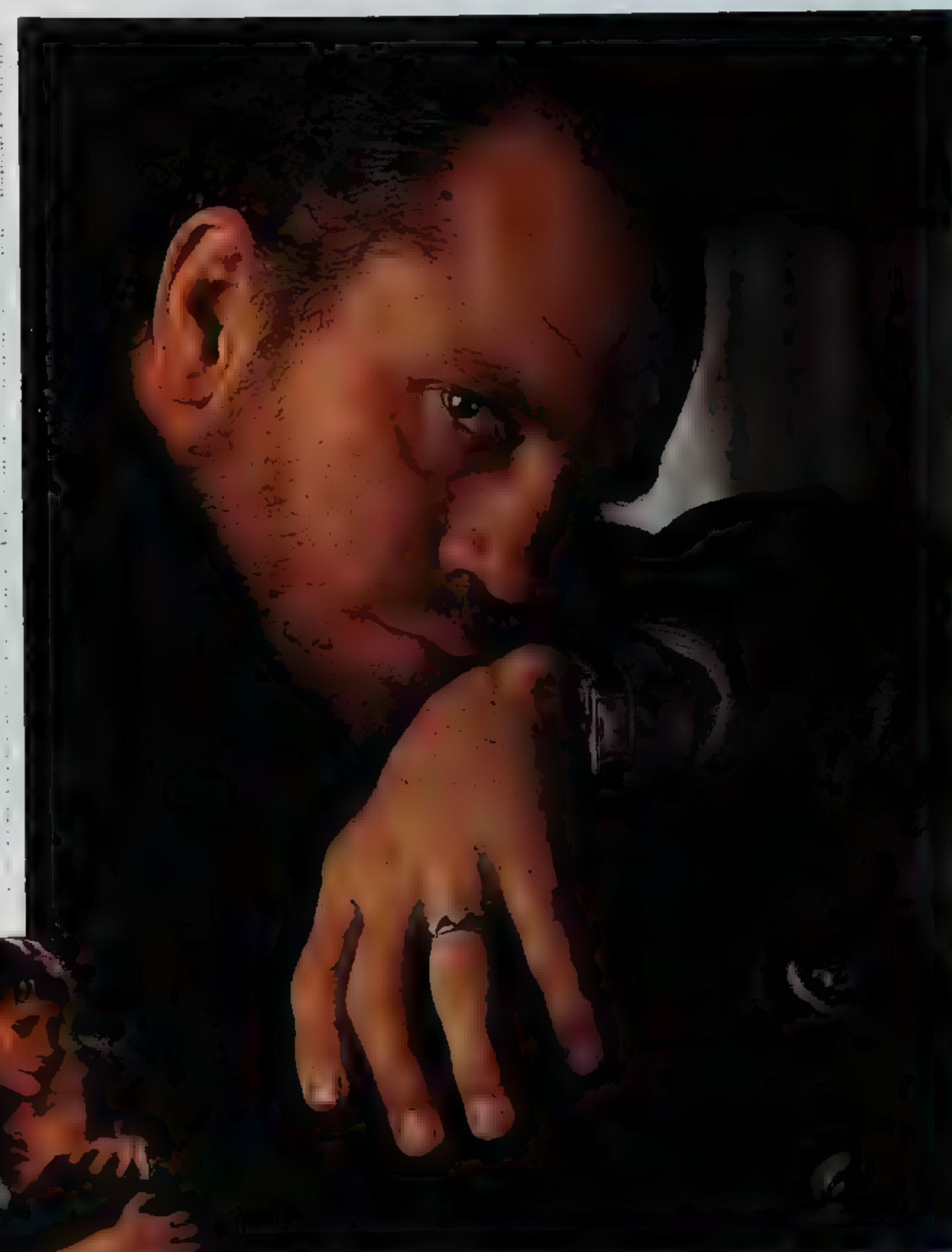
Trouble is, there's no equation for John Malkovich. He's been a sainted blind boarder in *Places in the Heart*, a sex-toy robot in *Making Mr. Right*, the chameleonic assassin of *In the Line of Fire*, and—most mesmerizingly—the ice-blooded seducer and walking moral wasteland of *Dangerous Liaisons*. Is Malkovich a star? Not by the usual standard: He's too effete, too balding, too weird.

Still, can you imagine any other American actor popping up in your video store in three disparate movies in the same week? Granted, you wouldn't know it from the box cover of **MARY REILLY** (1996, Columbia TriStar, R, priced for rental), even though Malkovich is the de facto romantic lead opposite Julia Roberts. And he's barely on the back of the box for **MULHOLLAND FALLS** (1996, MGM/UA, R,



HUGS AND HISSES: Malkovich (with Roberts in *Mary Reilly*, above) gives the evil eye

priced for rental), despite his small but crucial role. But these are both movies that want to attract a broad audience, and Malkovich is a rich, rich wine—a connoisseur's specialty. He is front and center on the video box for **THE**



CONVENT (1995, Fox Lorber, unrated, priced for rental), and that's

because this metaphysical Portuguese drama wants to attract sophisticated renters in the wake of its brief art-house release. Its strangeness, unfortunately, has nothing to do with Malkovich.

It's possible that the small, hardy

band of Malkovich acolytes were even more disappointed by *Mary Reilly* than all those Roberts fans waiting vainly for another *Pretty Woman*. An adaptation of Valerie Martin's 1990 novel about the relationship between Dr. Henry Jekyll (of Jekyll-and-Hyde fame) and his housekeeper, the movie was a reunion of *Dangerous Liaisons*' creative minds: director Stephen Frears, screenwriter Christo-

pher Hampton, Malkovich, and costar Glenn Close (in the small but acidly etched role of a brothel madam).

But where *Dangerous Liaisons* was a sumptuous banquet of manners, sex, and cruelty, *Mary Reilly* is a Victorian-era mulligan stew, neither scary nor intellec-

tually engaging. Reimagining Robert Louis Stevenson's spiritual horror story as a Brontë-style gothic romance may be a good book gimmick, but as a movie, it's like 19th-century *Ricki Lake*: "I Loved My Employer and His Evil Twin."

Curiously, Malkovich is more interest-

ing as stolid Jekyll than as slaving Hyde. He plays the latter as fey yet murderous Eurotrash, and we've seen these games from the actor before. His Jekyll is proper, pained, a good man betrayed by his own force of will. Because Malkovich doesn't often play decent characters, it makes for a fascinating stretch.

He doesn't have room to stretch a finger in *Mulholland Falls*—and still he's the most perversely intriguing thing in the movie. A pleasantly diverting *Chinatown* knockoff directed by Lee Tamahori (*Once Were Warriors*), *Falls* stars Nick Nolte as a police detective uncovering military secrets and deviant behavior in early '50s L.A. Chazz Palminteri, Chris Penn, and Michael Madsen are fellow cops, and together they resemble a squadron of Rock-'em Sock-'em Robots in fedoras. Melanie Griffith is also here, as are Andrew McCarthy, Jennifer Connelly, Treat Williams, and Bruce Dern.

And there's Malkovich, hovering in the background like a dissonant chord as Gen. Thomas Timms, the brilliant science geek behind the newly formed Atomic Energy Commission, responsible for eeeevil nuclear goings-on—and a mild sex fiend. The actor, in three scenes, plays him as a sad, well-intentioned ghost. He's so serene, in fact, that he nearly subverts *Falls'* good guy/bad guy moral order. Like I said, perverse.

The Convent is twisted from frame one—alarmingly, this makes Malkovich the most normal person in the picture. He's a scholar who comes to a Portuguese monastery to research Shakespeare's origins. Very quickly, though, the film devolves into a moody, overly literal *Faust* parable, with the scholar's wife (Catherine Deneuve) as Helen of Troy and the monastery's goatish keeper (Luis Miguel Cinteria) as the Devil. As those two duke it out for the scholar's soul, Malkovich rifles through folios and looks abstracted, possibly because the script hasn't given him any kinks. Bereft of his defining eccentricity, the actor finally reminds you of someone: Alec Guinness—minus the sex appeal. *Mary Reilly*: **C** *Mulholland Falls*: **B-** *The Convent*: **D**

THE UBIQUITOUS J.T. WALSH

THE NOT-NICE MAN COMETH

FIRST, YOU recognize his face. Then you think: bad guy. If you've seen *The Grifters*, *A Few Good Men*, *The Client*, *Outbreak*, *Nixon*, or *Executive Decision*, then you've seen J.T. Walsh portraying, in his words, "ethically challenged" individuals. Not that it bothers him. "It's better than doing the 'he went thataway' roles," he says. His characters, which tend to be middle-aged but-toned-down authority figures, drip with what he calls "a little juice."

Hard-pressed to think of a nice guy he's played, Walsh, 52, easily recalls the lowest—the porn producer having an affair with his daughter in 1991's *Defenseless*. Represented on video this week by the thrillers *Black Day Blue Night* and *Sacred Cargo* (see reviews on page 134) and in September by the indie comedy *The Low*



THE DARK SIDE: "It's fun to play these people," says Walsh

Life, Walsh says he has no problem accepting low-profile projects. "My motto has always been, Do whatever comes next," he laughs.

Born in San Francisco, Walsh was raised in Germany, where his father served in the military. After graduating from the University of Rhode Island, Walsh worked for a decade as, by turns, a teacher, salesman, journalist, restaurant manager, and social worker. But those became just day jobs when, at 31, the self-proclaimed hippie began acting in regional East Coast theaters. In 1974, Walsh hung out at the Theater at St. Clement's in New York City, where he met an unknown playwright named David Mamet. Cast in the role of Bobby in *American Buffalo*, he made \$100 for the six-week run. Ten years later, Mamet picked Walsh for the Broadway production of *Glengarry Glen Ross*, which was "the pop" that got him into the movies. Walsh moved to L.A., where he's been evil ever since.

Married briefly in his 20s, the unattached Walsh ("Who wants to go out with the bad guy?") lives in the San Fernando Valley with his 22-year-old son, John. He's currently playing—surprise—a morally ambiguous Navy colonel on NBC's sci-fi drama *Dark Skies*. "As an actor he conveys the attitude of the guy you call if you need a job done," says Bryce Zabel, the show's executive producer. "You wouldn't want to ask him how he got it done, but you'd call him."

"Sure, I want bigger parts," Walsh says. "I call Sharon Stone and say: 'Gimme a break. I just wanna make love to you.' She doesn't get back to me." —Kate Meyers

MY MOVIES

KEEPING UP WITH JONES

The 'Partridge' mom sings the praises of her Hollywood classics. BY SHIRLEY JONES

For aficionados of '70s TV she's the mod mother hen of The Partridge Family—but long before that pop-culture landmark, Shirley Jones had established herself as a versatile, Oscar-winning movie star. Clips from two of her best-loved musicals can be seen in the new-to-video documentary *Rodgers & Hammerstein: The Sound of Movies* (A&E). Here, Jones reminisces about her oeuvre, which ran the gamut from ingenues to prostitutes to The Music Man's Marian the librarian.

◆ **OKLAHOMA!** (1955, FoxVideo) I was very young—18—and very naive. Fortunately I had Fred Zinnemann as my first director. He was very nurturing and like a Svengali for me. He didn't treat the film as a musical; he made it a real American love story. I was thrilled to be playing Laurey, and I was Laurey. I was a little corn-fed girl from a small Pennsylvania town, so the acting came naturally to me.

◆ **CAROUSEL** (1956, FoxVideo) This is the best of the Rodgers & Hammerstein musicals. Unfortunately, it was not as good a motion picture as it was a play. That saddened me, because I felt that audiences should have flocked to this movie. Henry King was a wonderful director, but I don't think he was up to what the movie should have had.

◆ **ELMER GANTRY** (1960, MGM/UA) I was sick of the musical format, and I wanted to show I could do something else. I said to [writer-director] Richard Brooks: "I'll do the role [of the prostitute Lulu Bains] for nothing. I want this part." People said, "Your audience won't accept you in that kind of thing"—and some didn't. But it gave my career its longevity.

◆ **THE MUSIC MAN** (1962, Warner) The studio wanted Frank Sinatra to do the film, but Meredith Wilson [the source play's author] told them, "You cannot do this show unless Robert Preston does the part." And thank God that Wilson stood up for Bob, because nobody could do the role like him. He had a combination of Mr. Nice Guy and enough edge to play that role brilliantly.

◆ **THE COURTSHIP OF EDDIE'S FATHER** (1963, MGM/UA) I was a big fan of Glenn Ford's. He was so natural; the camera swooped him up. The story [of a kid's search for a wife for his dad] was so wonderful, and it hadn't been told before. Every divorced man or widower in the world could relate to it.

◆ **BEDTIME STORY** (1964, MCA/Universal) They remade this with Steve Martin and Michael Caine as *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, which wasn't nearly the picture that *Bedtime Story* was, because the original had Brando and Niven—talk about opposites! Brando was very disappointed that the movie didn't do well; now it's a cult film. The public, I think, wasn't interested in seeing Brando play comedy.

◆ **THE CHEYENNE SOCIAL CLUB** (1970, Warner) A wonderful film—Henry Fonda and James Stewart were brilliant together. If I had an acting class of young people, I would have them watch those two work. For the most part, they deviated from the script and just talked to each other. And I loved playing the madam [of the whorehouse that Stewart's character inherits]. There again, I had a little bit of something to play. —As told to David Everett



BLOOM COUNTY: The actress leaves through her past

THE WEEK

RECENT MOVIES

THINGS TO DO IN DENVER WHEN YOU'RE DEAD Andy Garcia, Christopher Walken (1995, Miramax, R, priced for rental) All overripe tough-guy jargon and stupidly stylized rub-outs, this movie wants to be Tarantinoesque in the very worst way—and it succeeds exactly that way. Early on, Garcia's Jimmy the Saint and his gang bloodily bungle a job, incurring the wrath of the local crime boss (Walken). After that, it's a long drag downhill as they're marked for death, with Garcia pausing to romance a pretty ski instructor (Gabrielle Anwar), his team sitting around waiting to get whacked, and everyone casually discussing really gross ways to kill people. The presence of the increasingly weird Walken (in a wheelchair yet) confirms this project's midnight-movie aspirations. But if you wait that late to pop it into the VCR you'll quickly fall asleep. **C-** —Michael Sauter

GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER Dan Aykroyd, Jack Lemmon (1996, HBO, R, priced for rental) Release delays and limited theatrical runs for comedies with seemingly solid casts don't always indicate a problem film, but they do in the case of writer-director Harvey Miller's paean to one man's attempt at



TAKING A FENCE: Suburbanite Aykroyd suspects Lemmon is a next-door Nazi in *Getting Away With Murder*

righteousness. Ethics professor and upstanding citizen Jack Lambert (Aykroyd) discovers he may be living next door to a Nazi war criminal (Lemmon) and decides it's his duty to make sure justice is served. But is his neighbor *really* whom the FBI says he is? What could have been a smart and sardonic—not to mention timely—social commentary turns into a humorless collection of caricatures that even the more forgiving video screen doesn't improve. **C-** —Erin Richter

DARKMAN III: DIE DARKMAN DIE Jeff Fahey, Arnold Vosloo (1996, MCA/Universal, R, priced for rental) In this superhero franchise's third installment—which debuted on HBO—executive producer Sam Raimi maintains the appropriately cheesy comic-book style that sparked the original. This time

Darkman (Vosloo) battles a drug-lord-and-sexy-scientist duo (Fahey and Darlaine Fluegel) whose black-market supersteroid makes 'roid rage seem like a snit fit. Despite occasional lazy dialogue ("Life's a bitch—and so am I") and an obnoxious, near-subliminal plug for the Universal Studios theme park, *Darkman III* delivers a kinetic video kick. **B-** —Tim Purtell

FAITHFUL Cher, Chazz Palminteri (1996, New Line, R, priced for rental) Perhaps it was the bunny slippers on Cher's feet (that certainly did it for me). Anyway, something in the ad dissuaded moviegoers from committing to this comedy about a faithless husband (a wan-looking Ryan O'Neal) who hires a hitman (Palminteri) to relieve him of his marital burden (Cher). Although the video box offers the

same strained whimsy as the movie poster—and the script, by Palminteri, contains some truly *duh* moments—this reasonably funny and ably acted distraction deserves a second chance. Just don't expect big guffaws or deep implications. And don't expect to see those silly slippers, either. **B-** —Melissa Pierson

BLACK DAY BLUE NIGHT Mia Sara, Gil Bellows (1996, Republic, R, priced for rental) This road thriller follows a familiar route: Two wronged women (Sara, Michelle Forbes) hop into a red Cadillac convertible, pick up a mysterious, handsome hitchhiker (Bellows) in the Utah desert, find themselves mixed up in a man-hunt for an armed robber, and are pursued by an overzealous cop (J.T. Walsh). A final, out-of-nowhere curveball steers this eerie, atmo-

FITNESS TAPE OF THE WEEK

'Shopping For Fitness'

Joining Cindy Crawford and Elle Macpherson, QVC queen Joan Rivers is expanding her sales kingdom with this satirical workout tape "for anyone who hates the gym." Guess she'll be changing her catchphrase to "Can we walk?"



spheric film into absurdity, but as a rental, *Black Day* is a surprisingly pleasant ride. **B-** —Nisid Hajari

SACRED CARGO Chris Penn, Martin Sheen (1996, Arrow, unrated, priced for rental) If only this thriller were as imaginative as the folks who thought Sheen and Penn could play brothers. The creative casting can't save this boring tale about an ex-Marine (Penn) and a priest (Sheen,

of course) smuggling millions in church jewels out of Russia while mixing with neo-Nazis and double-crossers. It's fun watching Penn throw his weight around as the affable hero, but no amount of swagger can keep this film from resembling a depressing travelogue of St. Petersburg. Besides, any mystery is 86'd by the presence of J.T. Walsh, who always plays the bad guy—even in Russia. **D** —J.R. Taylor

ANIMATED

ALL DOGS GO TO HEAVEN 2 Voices of Charlie Sheen, Ernest Borgnine (1996, MGM/UA, G, \$22.98) In this dog-eared sequel to the so-so 1989 cartoon feature, Charlie the heavenly dog (Sheen) comes back to earth to play guardian angel to another kid and embark on a shamefully obvious *Lady and the Tramp*-type romance, which will only make you wish you were watching that canine classic. **C-** —MS

LASERDISC

THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA Spencer Tracy, Felipe Pazo (1958, Warner, unrated, \$34.98) Hemingway's famous fish story makes its video debut here, and fortunately, it's been letterboxed; as seen previously on TV in pan-and-scan form, it might as well have been called *Just the Old Man*. However, even restored to its original dimensions, it's still not very good; essentially, it's a slow-moving, low-rent *Moby Dick* with portentous voice-overs and unconvincing process shots of Tracy in a studio tank. In fact, why director John Sturges (*The Magnificent Seven*) bothered to make it remains a mystery. As one wag put it at the time, it's a literary property as suited to film as "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." **C** —Steve Simels

COMING UP

Due in stores the week of Aug. 29–Sept. 4:

CASSETTES

- ◆ **HIGHLANDER, THE DIRECTOR'S CUT** (1986, Republic, unrated) Tenth-anniversary release of the fantasy starring Christopher Lambert as an immortal warrior and Sean Connery as his mentor, with footage never seen in the U.S.
- ◆ **ONE GOOD TURN** (1996, BMG, R) In this direct-to-video thriller, a mysterious stranger (James Remar) wreaks havoc on a couple's seemingly perfect world.

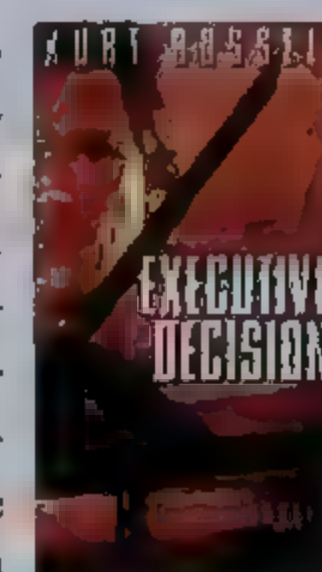
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- ◆ **THE GOLDEN AGE OF LOONEY TUNES, VOL. 5** (1932–49, MGM/UA, unrated) A collection of 49 classic cartoons featuring Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, and Elmer Fudd.

TOP VIDEOS

KURT AND EARNINGS

SNAKE'S BACK, all right. Not only did Kurt Russell's leather-clad antihero shoot up box offices last weekend in *John Carpenter's Escape From L.A.* (which nabbed \$8.9 million), but the star's turn as an anti-terrorist specialist rocketed the \$56 million-grossing airborne action flick *Executive Decision* to the No. 2 position on the rentals chart its first week on video. This comes on the heels of his previous blockbuster, 1994's sci-fi fantasy *Stargate*, which earned \$71 million in theaters, debuted at No. 1 on the rentals chart, and remained in the top 10 for eight weeks. The chart's only other debut belongs to a seafaring action flick: *White Squall* docks at No. 12 after reeling in a mere \$10 million in theaters.



LAST WEEK THIS WEEK TOP 10 TAPE RENTALS

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	TAPE RENTALS	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK
1	2	HOMEWARD BOUND II: LOST IN SAN FRANCISCO Robert Hays, Walt Disney	2	1
2	—	EXECUTIVE DECISION Kurt Russell, Warner	1	—
3	4	HAPPY GILMORE Adam Sandler, MCA/Universal	4	3
4	1	12 MONKEYS Bruce Willis, MCA/Universal	5	6
5	3	BROKEN ARROW John Travolta, 20th Century Fox	6	5
6	5	MR. HOLLAND'S OPUS Richard Dreyfuss, Hollywood	8	7
7	6	EYE FOR AN EYE Sally Field, Paramount	4	8
8	12	CITY HALL Al Pacino, Columbia TriStar	2	9
9	7	RUMBLE IN THE BRONX Jackie Chan, New Line	4	10
10	14	DIABOLIQUE Sharon Stone, Warner	2	—

TAPE SALES

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	TAPE SALES	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK
1	1	HOMEWARD BOUND II: LOST IN SAN FRANCISCO Robert Hays, Walt Disney, \$22.99	2	1
2	2	HOW THE WEST WAS FUN Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen, Warner, \$14.95	3	5
3	5	CLUELESS Alicia Silverstone, Paramount, \$14.95	11	4
4	4	UNDER SIEGE 2 Steven Seagal, Warner, \$19.98	2	3
5	3	NATURAL BORN KILLERS DIRECTOR'S CUT Woody Huellson, Vidmark, \$29.99	2	6
6	6	DANGEROUS MINDS Michelle Pfeiffer, Hollywood, \$19.98	3	7
7	7	THE ARISTOCATS Animated, Walt Disney, \$26.99	16	8
8	8	HEAVY METAL Animated, Columbia TriStar, \$19.95	10	9
9	9	FRIDAY Ice Cube, New Line, \$19.98	13	10
10	21	TOMMY BOY Chris Farley, Paramount, \$14.95	11	—

FITNESS TAPE SALES

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	FITNESS TAPE SALES	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK
1	1	THE FIRM: NOT-SO-TOUGH AEROBICS BMG, \$14.98	15	2
2	3	THE FIRM: BODY SCULPTING BASICS BMG, \$19.98	27	3
3	4	THE GRIND WORKOUT: FITNESS WITH FLAVA Sony, \$12.98	31	4
4	2	THE FIRM: 5 DAY ABS BMG, \$14.98	43	5
5	8	THE FIRM: LOW IMPACT AEROBICS BMG, \$19.98	41	6
6	6	THE GRIND WORKOUT: HIP HOP AEROBICS Sony, \$12.98	59	7
7	5	THE FIRM: LOWER BODY SCULPTING BMG, \$14.98	15	8
8	7	THE FIRM: UPPER BODY BMG, \$14.98	33	9
9	—	CLAUDIA SCHIFFER: PERFECTLY FIT ABS CBS/Fox, \$14.98	1	10
10	11	YOUR PERSONAL BEST WITH ELLE MACPHERSON Buena Vista, \$19.99	81	—

SOURCE: VIDEO BUSINESS FOR THE WEEK ENDING AUG. 12, 1996
FITNESS DATA: BILLBOARD FROM THE ISSUES DATED AUG. 17, 1996

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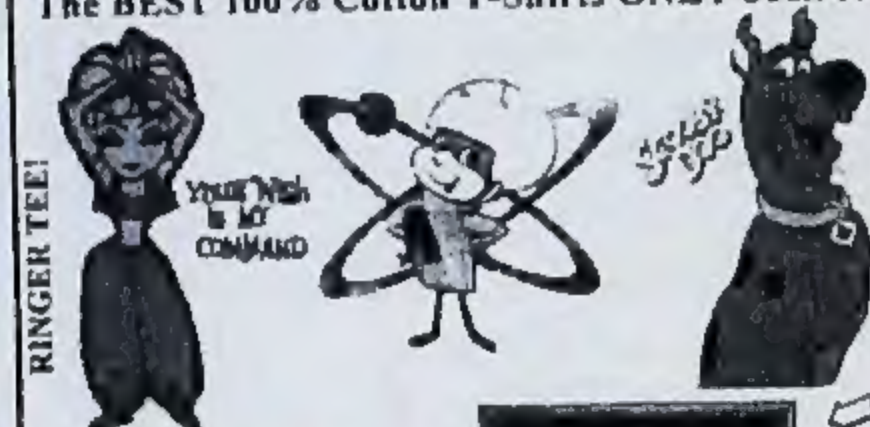
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ENCORE

Malcolm Sheiks Up Morocco

BY ADAM KELLEY



Forbes' glittery birthday gala took 800 guests to Tangier seven years ago

IT WAS A PARTY like any other, host Malcolm Forbes shrugged, just bigger and more expensive. But for most of the VIPs who helped the publishing mogul celebrate his 70th birthday at his gleaming palace in Tangier on Aug. 19, 1989, it was really more like an all-expenses-paid field trip to a world that was, even by their own affluent standards, unfathomably opulent.

Barely 24 hours before, most of the 800-plus invitees—an assortment of glossy personalities that included Barbara Walters, Walter Cronkite, Oscar de la Renta, and three U.S. governors—had crammed into three Morocco-bound jets chartered by Forbes at a reported cost of \$1 million. "Malcolm had a lot of money, and he loved spending it," explains *Cosmopolitan* editor in chief Helen Gurley Brown, who attended with her husband, Hollywood producer David Brown. "His parties were always special, and I think people knew that Morocco would be an especially scrumptious happening."

Honorary hostess Elizabeth Taylor, glittering expensively in an emerald green caftan that made her look like one of the host's prized Fabergé eggs, set

the standard for glamour, while Forbes delivered on his promise of luxury. Six hundred tambourining belly dancers and a cavalry of sword-bearing guards swarmed around the grounds; guests relaxed under bedouin tents. Around midnight, opera diva Beverly Sills sang "Happy Birthday." Soon after a 16-minute fireworks display, the party was over.

Boy, was it. Back in the U.S., a backlash was brewing. Press reports and magazine features had depicted the celebration as a capitalist bacchanal, an image that network footage of carousing celebrities did little to dispel. The public debated the morality of such flagrant excess—and the editorials flew when Forbes claimed that since so many of the guests advertised in *Forbes* magazine, most of his \$2 million in expenses were tax deductible. In the end, Forbes never did try to write off the party, perhaps because of the sudden flak. "He did not expect that," says Brown. "He was just horrified that there was so much complaining."

Like so many of the guests, Henry Kissinger wondered what Forbes would do to "top it on his 75th." As it turned out, Tangier was the multimillionaire's last bash. He suffered a heart attack and died in his sleep Feb. 24, 1990, at Timberfield, his 40-acre estate in Far Hills, N.J. At the star-studded memorial service in Manhattan, Robert Forbes, one of Malcolm's five children, said, "It's been a hell of a party, Pop." ♦

TIME CAPSULE

Aug. 19, 1989

Uncle Buck was the favorite at the box office; TV viewers were intoxicated by ***Cheers***; Richard Marx's **"Right Here Waiting"** lingered at the top of the singles chart; and John le Carré readers moved into the ***Russia House***.

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